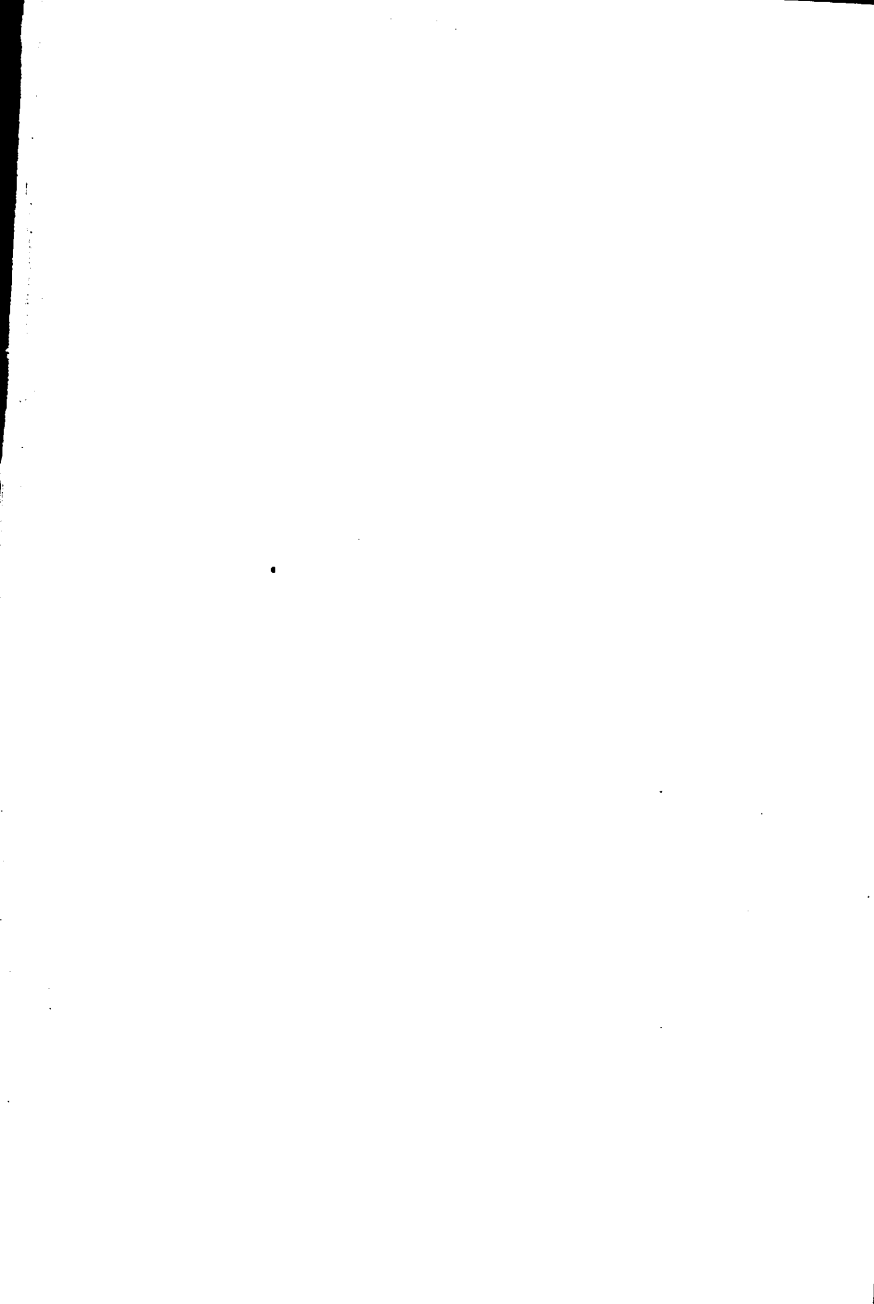


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THE PRESS AND THE GOSPEL

The Story of a Japanese Experiment.

By
W. H. MURRAY WALTON, M.A.

世相・社會相の縮圖

世相・社會相の縮圖
逍遙博士精選 河竹繁俊氏
編輯及校訂

全二十卷一萬餘頁

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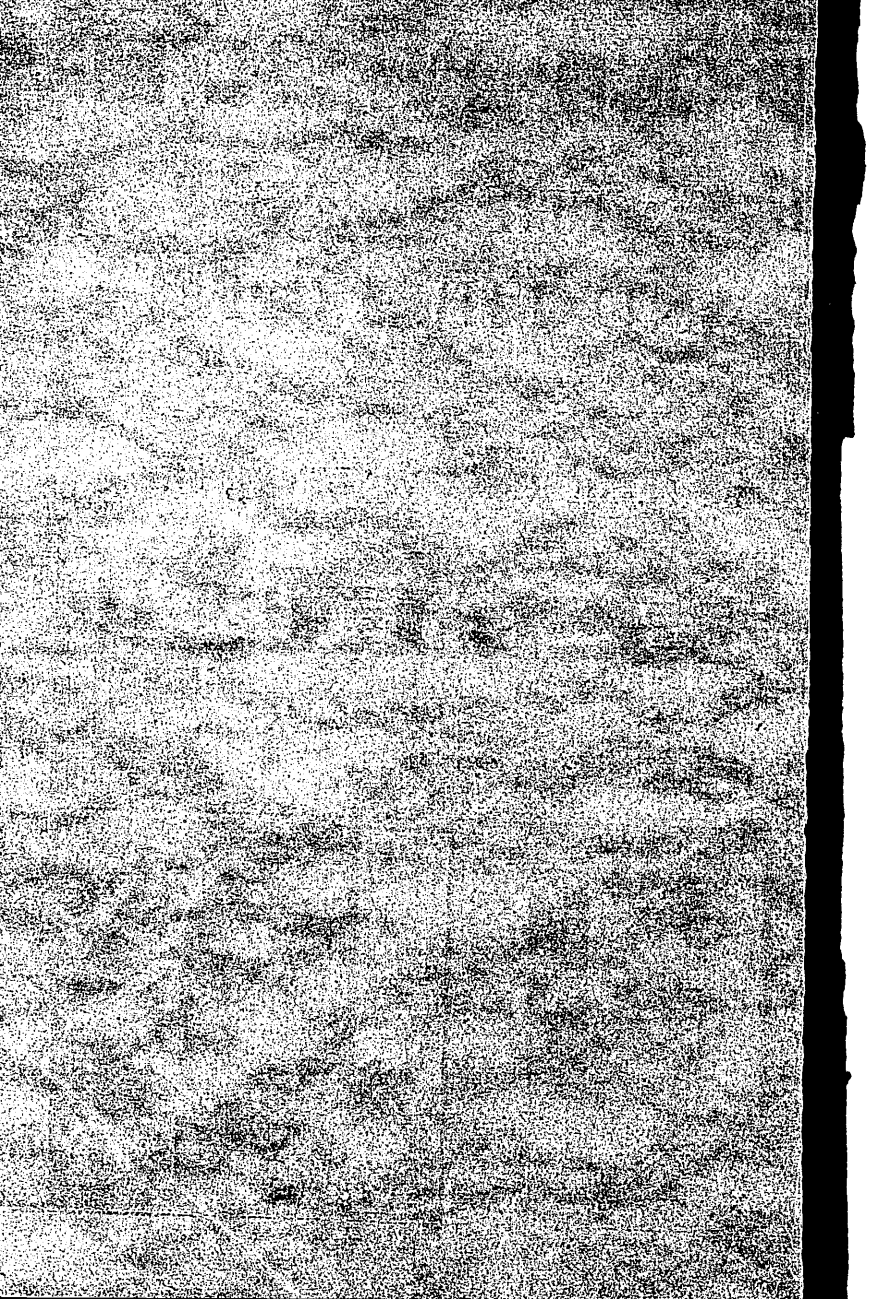
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THE PRESS AND THE GOSPEL

THE
PRESS AND THE GOSPEL
THE STORY OF A JAPANESE EXPERIMENT

BY
W. H. MURRAY WALTON, M.A.

Sometime Exhibitioner of Pembroke College, Cambridge
Joint-author of *Japan and Christ*, etc.
Church Missionary Society

WITH A FOREWORD BY
THE HON. HAMPEI NAGAO
Chairman of the Japan Christian News Agency
Late Member of Parliament
Late Head of the Electrical Bureau
of the City of Tokyo, etc.

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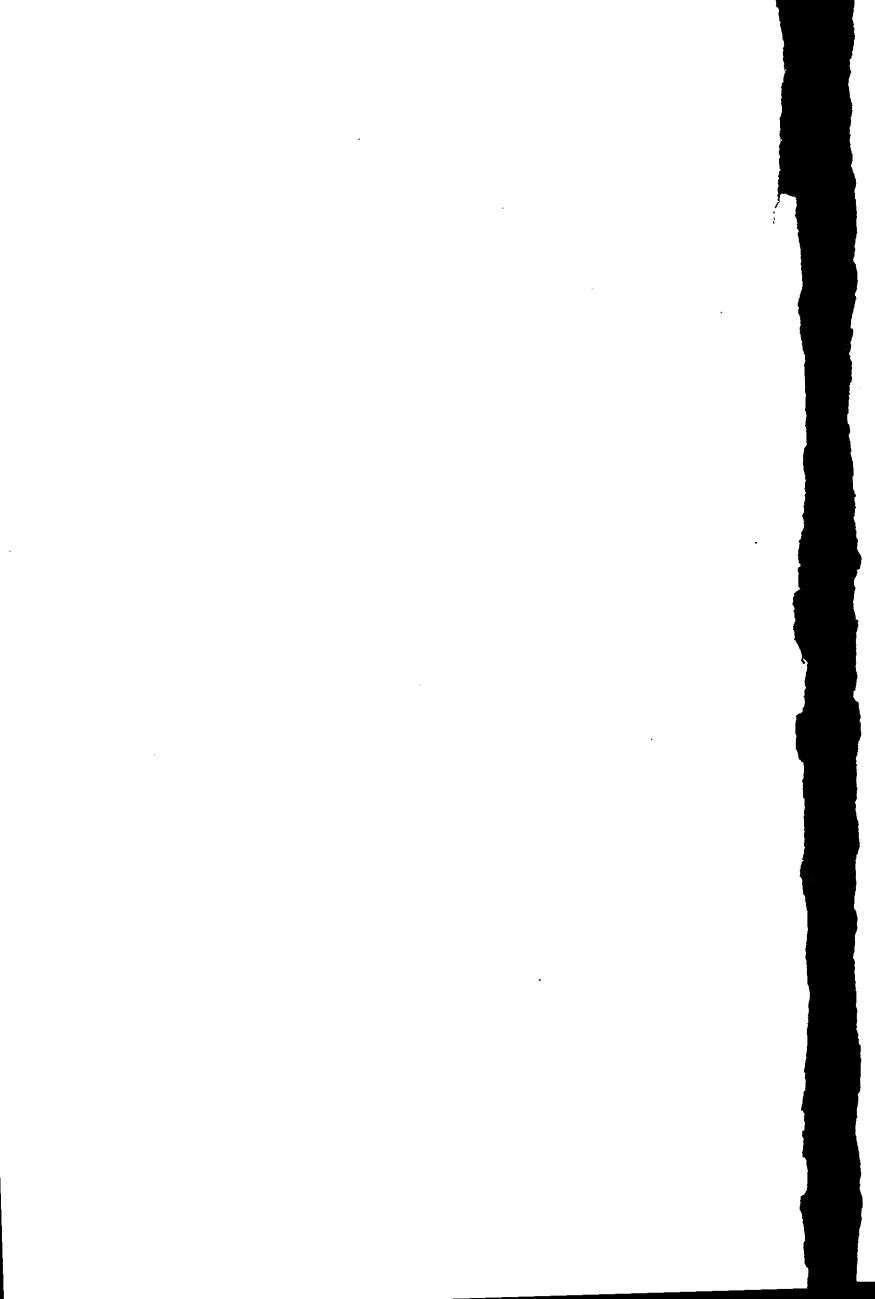
MY FELLOW-WORKERS
IN NEWSPAPER EVANGELISM
ESPECIALLY
TO MY COLLEAGUES
IN THE SEIKOKAI NEW LIFE HALL

The very food of life to me
Was that companionship and love of ours;
I taste again its welling sweetness.

Oh, may God
His safe, sweet keeping give,
And in you may His wondrous image live,
Dear friends, I knew among the cherry flowers!

—From a Japanese poem by Iwataro Miyauchi
Translated by Louis J. Erickson

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FOREWORD

The "good news" of our Lord Jesus Christ has been propagated by word of mouth for centuries. The development of the "radio" may make this method more effective as well as extensive. We cannot, however, overlook the power of the printed page, especially that of the daily newspapers. The Church should make much more extensive use of this powerful means in preaching the Gospel. This is more particularly so with the work of missionaries who wish to reach non-Christians.

Furthermore, as it is mentioned in this book, to us Japanese often the introduction to a thought through the printed page has a surprisingly and singularly strong influence. Perhaps the appeal made in printed form has a good effect, if not the very best, on our people when we try to reach the heart of Japanese. I believe that the follow-up work carried on in connexion with the work of the Newspaper Evangelism is one of the strongest weapons to win souls for Christ.

I am, therefore, very glad that the experiment of Newspaper Evangelism has been started in Japan. In Japan the newspaper exercises perhaps a stronger influence, and has a larger circulation, than any other country in the Mission Field. The "romance" of the development of this type of work is the theme of this book, and the author is one of the most successful missionaries in this line of service.

It has been my privilege to be associated with Mr. Murray Walton from the beginning of the Japan

Christian News Agency, which is an organization for the mutual help and information of Newspaper Evangelists, with the particular mission as pioneers of influencing the secular press with the Christian message.

The present state of the Japanese Church may be compared with the men in Nehemiah's day. Their primary concern is to build and maintain the Church as it is, and keep their sword unsheathed for the missionary battle. But while the force of the enemy is overwhelming, too often the hands of the Church have been kept busy with the task of their own "house building." A revitalization of the "old" Church is bitterly needed. For the development of the work of the Japan Christian News Agency, Japanese Christians of all denominations are rendering enthusiastic help. If this kind of work gets generous support from the Christians of the West, the result will be even more "romantic" than the story contained in this book.

Faced with grave crises as Japan is to-day, international, national, economic, social, and at the root of all, the spiritual, the newspaper of this land is daily filled with "bad news." May we, Christians of the West and the East, in united spirit and enterprise, put the influence of the "good news" of Jesus Christ into the columns of the newspaper, and lead those sheep without a shepherd to the fold for His glory.

It gives me a great pleasure to recommend Mr. Walton's book, which is filled with information and inspiration, to fulfil this purpose.

H. NAGAO.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS book, as its title denotes, is the story of a Japanese experiment, but it is an experiment as yet unfinished. Indeed, one of the reasons for which the book has been written is to enable those who read to have a share in carrying it through to completion *ad Dei majorem gloriam*.

It is impossible to mention by name all those to whom I have been indebted in the carrying out of the experiment: my colleagues in the experiment itself, my fellow-workers in Church and Mission, and the host of those who by their prayers and sympathy and gifts have made the Newspaper Work possible. But I would especially thank my friend, Rev. M. S. Murao, now in charge of the work, whose co-operation has been an unending joy and stimulus. Indeed, without it the work could not have reached the present stage.

I shall be always glad to answer any inquiries which may be addressed to me c/o Church Missionary Society, Salisbury Square, London, E.C.4.

W. H. MURRAY WALTON.

August, 1932.

PROLOGUE

A VISION OF THE PAST

"We cannot live without Christ and we cannot bear to think of men living without Him."

—*The Christian Message, Jerusalem Meeting.*

AWAY in the heart of the island of Shikoku in Japan there hangs a wonderful bridge. It is made of the branches of the living vine. Eight hundred years ago a party of fugitives, defeated in war and with no hope of mercy at the hands of their foes, fled to this remote spot, where the mountains on the one side and a gorge on the other afforded both concealment and safety. Here they lived generation after generation, a group apart, preserving their old customs and language and inheriting a natural suspicion of their neighbours. But gradually it dawned on them that the old days of war were over and that they could live at peace, and so it came about that the bridge was flung across the ravine as the symbol of a new relationship.

It was this bridge which was the objective of a tour I made some fifteen months after my arrival in Japan.

One of the earliest missionaries, not without reason, described the Japanese language as "the

devil's best instrument for keeping the Gospel out of the country." Certainly a language which, not content with the original Japanese, must needs also adopt various Chinese dialects, which prefers a system of ideographs to one of syllables, and in addition has given to each ideograph at least two different pronunciations and sometimes as many as five or six; a language which has rejected the system of tones to distinguish words of the same spelling with the result that there are over fifty "shu" all pronounced alike; a language in which the order of words is nearly the opposite to that followed in English, and which is further complicated by an elaborate system of honorifics, so that the word for wife depends on whether she is mine or yours; a language of this kind is apt to be a very effective curb on the energy of a young missionary. My seniors had told me that my future usefulness depended very largely on the extent to which I could get hold of Japanese, and that until I had satisfied them as to my progress I could hope for no post of responsibility.

My visit to the bridge was for the purpose of language study. By getting away from all Western amenities, among the people themselves, where, willy-nilly, I had to use the language or starve, I hoped to accumulate enough knowledge to succeed in persuading the examiners as to my progress.

I had left my bicycle, tramped the ten miles over the mountains to the bridge, and was on my way back when I overtook a countryman—just the sort of man on whom to try my Japanese. With courteous curiosity he began to ask me various

questions about myself: "Where do you come from?" "What is your country?" "How old are you?" and then he added: "What are you?" I replied as best I could that I was a teacher of Christianity. Back flashed the question: "Can you tell me how to become a Christian?"

It was a question which I hardly anticipated. I was fifty miles from the nearest church, in a part of the country where I suppose no Christian worker had ever been before.

I answered him as best I could, took his name and address so as to be able to send him literature, and then hastened on, as I had still far to go ere night fell. As I made my way down the mountain side with the words ringing in my ears, there could be seen wending their way between the terraced fields other folk like him, going to their home and the evening meal and rest after the long, long hours of the day. Suddenly there broke on the stillness of the mountain air the mellow tones of the temple bell. It was a call to worship—whom?

That countryman's question haunted me, for I had heard it before.

"The cry unuttered of an untaught folk."

It had been the first impression I had received on coming to Japan. It is one which has never left me, for half a population of sixty million is still unreached.

Some months before, I had seen an experiment by an American missionary. He was using the columns of the local press to advertise Christianity. When he left a few years later he had had applica-

tions from every one of the 257 villages in the prefecture.

I wove the story of the countryman's question and the missionary's experiment into an article for the C.M.S. *Gleaner*. The net result was £175 in hard cash, and the prospect of starting Newspaper Evangelism in the prefecture in which I lived. In the pages which follow will be found the story of the experiment.

CHAPTER I

PROLONGING THE PROLOGUE

AN unreached country, a Japanese newspaper, and a Christian article—the links between these three form the motive and method of Newspaper Evangelism.

To many people Japan, with its world-position, its honourable international record, and its Church under able indigenious leadership, is already more or less a Christian country. Yet it is probably no exaggeration to say that the great bulk of Japanese have only a very hazy idea of what Christianity is. The popular idea of the nature of God is so utterly different from the Christian revelation that people are not naturally Christian in their thinking. Christ is recognized as one of the world's great teachers, but nothing like the homage is paid to Him as, for example, in India. The most popular Christian festival, Christmas, by the very spelling of its name in Japanese, is not suggestive of any Christian connexion. In connexion with recent events in the Far East, the National Christian Council of Japan, by its public adherence to the principles of the League of Nations and the Kellogg Pact, took a step which was far ahead of public opinion, but its

effect was almost negligible. The average educated man in Japan to-day has very little interest in vital religion. He will probably admit that Christianity is the best of the bunch, but it does not make any great appeal to him. This does not for a moment, however, suggest that he is satisfied with things as they are; he is not.

One of the chief reasons for this lack of interest is that Christianity has not yet got into the national life. This is particularly true of the country districts, which are still impervious to Christian influence. Rousseau has said: "It is the people which make the land, the country people which make the nation." What was true of France when he wrote is even more true of Japan to-day. Not until Christianity has penetrated the country districts and been absorbed into the life of the country folk will it be possible to call Japan Christian.

The Christian Church, as such, is hardly touching the country. Of close on ten thousand villages or village areas, the homes of half the population, the Church has entered barely five hundred. Of the fifteen million in country towns not included in the above, only half are reached. This in itself is serious, but what is even more serious is that despite an awakening interest in rural evangelism, the rate of progress is infinitesimal.

Now when we come to the Japanese newspaper we find ourselves touching one of the most influential forces in Japanese life. Before the introduction of modern journalism into Japan in 1868, news was chiefly conveyed to the people by means of travelling singers, ballads, and lampoons, which were popular

in the sense that they were liked, but not in the sense that they were widely read. Most people could not read. Indeed, even after the introduction of education and the newspaper, for many years "the fact that a newspaper carrier visited the house became a sign of an illustrious family, and the wealthy people from every village called at the Prefectural Office to beg for the privilege of becoming an honourable subscriber to the newspaper."¹

But to-day, with education universal, everybody reads the newspapers. It has been computed that half the homes of Japan take some form of newspaper. It is no longer the privilege of the illustrious families only; the rickshaw man can be seen reading his paper if he is not playing chess! It is estimated that there are three hundred daily papers in Japan of some repute, though the number actually registered is somewhere in the neighbourhood of four times that number. Some of the lesser known papers exist more or less solely for purposes of blackmail, from which they levy quite a good income. They can hardly come under the category of *newspapers*, though what they contain is not lacking in spice.

Some of these papers have a circulation of over a million, and produce as many as eight editions a day. The telephoto system has been in use for some years, while the biggest paper now operates its own fleet of aeroplanes between Tokyo and Osaka. Their foreign correspondents keep them

¹ Quoted K. Kawabe, *The Press and Politics in Japan*, p. 40.

au fait with the thought and activities of the West while efficient news agencies keep them supplied with all the latest information.

To a man whose only reading, and probably whose only contact with the outside world is the newspaper, it is not difficult to see how great an influence it can have on his life and thought. Indeed it is not too much to say that in an educated country like Japan the press ranks with the school and the home as one of the three great formative influences in national life.

The first person to awake fully to the value of the press as an evangelistic agency was the Rev. Albertus Pieters, an American missionary working in the city of Oita. It is true that others before him had made use of the press to insert a Christian text or a Church notice, but he developed the method on scientific lines and with a vision which is appreciated more as the years pass. Indeed his system of follow-up has formed the basis of the whole campaign ever since.

Whether it was due to his Dutch ancestry or not, Dr. Pieters possessed a rare fighting spirit, and got into more than one scrape as a result of the material that he published. For example, on one occasion he attacked the compulsory attendance of school children at Shinto shrines, which is a common practice, and would be innocuous if the shrines were what they are declared to be—non-religious. By the following Sunday the Sunday schools in the town were empty, while a graduate of the Imperial University, an ardent Shintoist, undertook to answer the article in a series upholding the national cult. So power

ful, however, were Dr. Pieters's articles that his opponent ended by becoming a Christian himself!

Not all of his articles, however, were of this character. They generally consisted of some careful exposition of Christian truth, and their penetrative value was immense. The response they elicited was a good measure of the interest they aroused.

The value of this method in a rural area is obvious. The rural mind works slowly. The Christian evangelist needs to recognize this; he will not capture the country by shock tactics.

The living resident agent is the most effective witness for Christ, but when such is not forthcoming, the newspaper can be a good second. At all events Dr. Pieters blazed a trail which it has been the good fortune of many to follow, as the subsequent narrative will show.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY DAYS

"I have read with great interest of the work which you are doing in an evangelical way through the vernacular newspapers. May all highest blessing attend your effort."

—RANDALL CANTUAR.

August 4th, 1922.

IN the previous chapter something was said about the unoccupied nature of Japan. The prefecture (Jap. *Ken*) of Hiroshima in west Japan, in which I was stationed, was no exception. This prefecture contains a population of a million and two-thirds living in an area of about 3,200 square miles (the equivalent, say, of Kent and Sussex). These people live in 4 cities, 54 towns, and 355 villages. The four cities, with less than a quarter of the total population, have 28 churches; of the 54 towns 16 are occupied, while of the 355 villages the Christian Church has only entered five! This was the field that lay before us when word came from the Church Missionary Society that £175 had been sent to start Newspaper Evangelism in Hiroshima Ken.

Two problems, however, presented themselves immediately, the one of personnel, the other due to local conditions. At that time I was still very junior, not even through all my language examinations. My first thought was whether the money

should not be handed over to one of my seniors. But Mr. Pieters dissuaded me with the promise of every assistance I required. The only thing to do was to peg away at the language and search for a suitable Japanese colleague. This was made a definite matter of prayer. One disappointment succeeded another, culminating in the withdrawal at the eleventh hour of one who seemed eminently suitable. There was only one thing to do; the very next day the answer came. A fellow missionary, not knowing of my quest, wrote that he was looking for a post for his language teacher, and wondered whether I was requiring such a man. Now the man I wanted was one who had a real evangelistic keenness, some pastoral experience, and a first-hand knowledge of the press, while with a view to harmonious working it was expedient that he should have had some personal connexion with foreigners and their ways. I made inquiries about the man that my friend recommended. I found that this teacher, as a young man, had been expelled from his home rather than deny Christ; there was no doubt about his keenness. He had worked as a Government official on the island of Tsushima, and had started a church there. For nine years he had been assistant editor to a big provincial paper in south Japan, in special charge of the advertisements. He had acted as secretary to the bishop of the diocese. And, as if that were not enough, at the time of writing he was living in the same town as Dr. Pieters, and so could study first hand the type of work he was to do. There could be no doubt that Masami Ninomiya was the man appointed for the work.

He joined us in April, 1919. Thirteen years later, after service faithful and true, he retired. He had finished his last letter on a Saturday evening. The next morning he was taken seriously ill, and two days later passed over to his reward. There are souls all over Japan who owe everything to the work of one whose name never appeared on a letter.

Long before the coming of Ninomiya I had begun to make inquiries as to the possibility of Christian articles and advertisements. My representative was a Christian, who himself had considerable business with the newspapers concerned. He reported that the papers were interested, but when it came to making terms, difficulties at once began to arise. The prefecture of Hiroshima is one of the chief centres of Shinshu, the most active of the Buddhist sects. The attitude of the public was anything but favourable. Only a few weeks before, a Christian text had appeared in connexion with an advertisement of some patent medicine, and the editor received a storm of protests that his columns should be used to propagate the hated religion. The position taken by the two editors was: "I myself am not averse to Christianity. But if I put Christian articles in my paper I will antagonize my readers and cause them to take my rival." It was a perfectly logical position; nevertheless we hoped that British persistency might win through. But after months of negotiations all that we could report was that one of the papers was ready to take our advertisements at six times the usual rates, "to make up for any possible drop in circulation." Then there appeared in the *C.M.S. Intercession Paper*,

used regularly by some ten thousand people, the following notice: "The editor whose paper has the largest circulation is anxious about possible Buddhist opposition. Let us pray that this difficulty may be overcome. The initial stages of the work are likely to be critical." Within four months the entire situation had changed. A strike in the office of the paper led to the resignation of the editor. We interviewed his successor and his answer was: "Yes, I will be glad to put in your advertisements, but of course I will put in Buddhist ones also." We rather welcomed the idea; we felt we would score by the contrast.

Some months before a small paper in the city of Kuré, a naval arsenal about twenty miles away, had also expressed a willingness to print our advertisements. But just before making a contract, it led an attack on a prominent Christian, hoping that by beating the anti-Christian drum it might increase its circulation. When I told my friends about the paper's offer they smiled, and one who was on the staff of the paper advised me to wait. Imagine my surprise, therefore, after the articles had started in the Hiroshima press, on receiving a visit from the local representative of the Kuré paper requesting me to give him an article on Christianity to go in free! The theme of the article we gave him was patriotism and the open mind; the result was a six months contract on very favourable terms.

Yet another newspaper editor turned up with a similar request, but the paper he represented did not have a very savoury reputation, so I declined his offer. He got his own back on me by describing

me as "an American missionary having close affiliations with the I.W.W."

It may be of interest to give a translation of the first article that appeared, for purposes of contrast with the material issued now if for nothing else. It ran as follows:

"THE NEW LIFE HALL

"Every week on this page and in this place will appear an article called 'New Life Discussion.' If anyone wants to know what it is about, the answer is that it is concerned with the New Life which the true God has revealed to us through Jesus Christ. It is issued by the New Life Hall, recently founded in Hiroshima.

"New Life, it should be explained, is something which brings peace and happiness to men and women in this troubled world, and offers a bright and glorious hope amid all its darkness.

"But that is not all. In its principles lies the solution of all moral, social and international problems. Witness, for example, the League of Nations, of which Japan is one of the 'Big Five.' This is an application of such principles to world problems. Its very founders are men who themselves have drunk deeply of New Life.

"But this New Life Hall is especially for individuals; its teaching will be set forth in a way which all can understand. Anybody, therefore, who reads this advertisement and wants to study Christianity further, will receive on application a free supply of literature, and will also be entitled to join a library should he so desire.

“The founder of the New Life Hall is Murray Walton, a graduate of Cambridge University and a missionary of the Nihon Seikokai.¹”

The reference to my education was deliberate, as the Japanese attach great importance to a man's educational record, and Cambridge is well known by repute in Japan.

The title New Life Hall had been adopted after considerable thought. That our choice appealed to the Japanese received unexpected confirmation shortly afterwards, when a neighbouring chemist announced the invention of “New Life Pills,” which, if taken according to instructions, would result in the patient being “born again.” In this case the word of pills and hall also happen to be the same! The name New Life Hall has since been adopted by most of the Newspaper Evangelism centres in the country.

After the Christian advertisements had been going for some months the Buddhist ones suddenly ceased, and shortly after a shortage of funds compelled us to follow their example. We took the opportunity, however, when an invitation came to us from the editor to continue, of asking why our rival had ceased. “Oh! those articles! They caused such quarrels among the members of my staff who belonged to different sects that I had to order that they be stopped. Indeed,” he went on to say, “I have actually had letters from some of my Buddhist readers congratulating me on the tone of the Christian articles!”

¹ The name of the Japanese branch of the Anglican Communion.

Thus were two problems solved.

The response to the articles was immediate. Before we left Hiroshima on furlough twenty months later we had had 1,700 requests for further information from every part of the Empire, including 160 of the unoccupied villages of Hiroshima Ken. The letters and visits were from people of every kind and description: from schoolmasters and uneducated folk, from city dwellers and countrymen, from hospital nurses and patients, from men in the army and navy and the consular service, and from Buddhist and Shinto priests. One writer, who afterwards was baptized, wrote to say, when ordering some hymn-books, how the fourteen employees under him now sang hymns instead of lewd songs. Another, a village teacher, asked for hymns with the music written in figures instead of notes so that she might teach them to her children. A headmaster reported that the library books went the round of his staff before being returned. An opponent wrote a lengthy letter setting forth his reasons why Christianity is such a menace to his country. One ambitious youth inquired whether it was possible to teach him singing by correspondence, while another asked us to send by return "some Christian peace of mind."

Among the most striking results of those early days was the case of the vice-mayor. One hot Sunday afternoon a visitor was announced at the New Life Hall. His card showed him to be the vice-mayor of a town of some eight thousand inhabitants a few miles from Hiroshima. He had been to call on a friend and, while waiting, had caught sight of

our article in the paper. He told me how for years he had been seeking peace in Buddhism, but without avail. Had Christianity anything to offer? We told him our message, and ere we parted we knelt together in prayer. That evening he went to the nearest church, and shortly afterwards was received as a catechumen. Then the music began. His wife was already deeply upset at her husband's action. Then the townsfolk heard about it, and so did the local priest. The town had never had a Christian before. Turn him out. And yet he was a good vice-mayor. His religion didn't seem to spoil his work. When the period of his service came to an end, despite a Buddhist protest meeting, he was re-elected, and he has continued to occupy the post ever since. His wife and daughter joined him in baptism, and in the last letter I had from him he said:

“One thing in which we have had special blessing is an early morning prayer meeting. For nineteen months we have had one every day without interruption. We meet in my house from 5-6.10 a.m. for Bible study and prayer together. We have also had a service every Sunday for the past three years in the home of another Christian. We are about twenty who meet together.”

The work not only brought us into touch with individuals, but it also served to open fresh doors. For some years we had held meetings in a little town thirty miles west of Hiroshima, but finally opposition had proved so strong that they had to be given up.

As a result of new inquirers in the town, it proved possible to make a fresh beginning. In another town, a little port on the Inland Sea, remote from any church, three meetings were held in the home of the vice-mayor (different from the above), whose daughter had become an earnest inquirer.

Of course all this activity roused Buddhist opposition, and the local priests lost no time in founding a Buddhist New Life Society, and organizing a mass meeting in the city of Kuré, but that was the last we heard of it.

In September, 1920, the World's Sunday School Convention was held in Tokyo. With characteristic generosity the authorities erected a huge temporary structure for the meetings. It was burnt to the ground the day before the Conference opened. This served to secure for the Conference a degree of publicity which it could have obtained in no other way. The proceedings day by day were reported in the press of the country. Then the idea suddenly struck us, here is Christian propaganda free; can't we make use of it? So a short notice appeared in the local papers immediately after the report of the Conference:

“WORLD'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION

“FREE GRANT OF CHRISTIAN LITERATURE!

“To all those who are anxious to study Christianity, a free grant of literature will be made on application to the New Life Hall, Hiroshima.”

The result was seventy-five applications, more than double our usual weekly average. Then the idea

came, why not go farther afield and try one of the bigger papers? Two days later the *Osaka Asahi*, one of the biggest papers, had the same advertisement. Next morning I was sitting in the room 9 feet by 12 feet, which served as the "New Life Hall," and which housed the Tract Depot, the Circulating Library, the Statistical Bureau, the Correspondence Course School, and the secretary, when I heard the familiar postman's call followed by a bump. I went to the front door and found a hundred applications on the floor. The next post brought a hundred more, and by the time the stream ceased, we had had over seven hundred. The members of the local church came to the rescue, and ere the week was over every one of them had had a personal reply and a bundle of literature.

But this was admittedly a special occasion. What sort of response would we get if we put an advertisement into the same paper when there was no Sunday School Convention and free publicity? We made the experiment with an article entitled "Christianity and Spiritual Peace." Three hundred more wrote in. There was no doubt about it; we had tapped something big.

Fortunately, both the Mission on the field and the Society at home were alive to the possibilities of this new method, and when we returned on furlough, it was with the goodwill and encouragement of those concerned in an attempt to raise interest and support for the extension of the work. Though the experiment was still at its beginning, yet it promised great things.

CHAPTER III

BEGINNING AGAIN AND GOING AHEAD

“There is one thing worse than having a fall; it is not getting up again.”—BISHOP TAYLOR SMITH.

DURING my absence it was decided that the Newspaper Work should be transferred to the capital, and accommodation was found in the Whidborne Memorial Hall on the Ginza, the Oxford Street of Tokyo. Here, for upwards of thirty years, under the leadership of the veteran missionary, the Rev. W. P. Buncombe, the Gospel had been preached to the crowds that passed by. It was most fitting, therefore, that such a place should be made the headquarters of Newspaper Evangelism.

On September 1st, 1923, Tokyo was rocked by earthquake and destroyed by fire. The Whidborne Hall did not escape. The Newspaper Work was simply blotted out, Mr. Ninomiya barely escaping with his life. After the first shock he collected a few of his belongings into a basket and then, with his wife and daughter, for hour after hour dodged the flames, until finally, in a state of exhaustion, they found refuge in the grounds of one of the Imperial Palaces. But even then the smoke and heat were

so intense that they could only breathe by keeping their heads close to the ground. After two days they obtained food, and finally secured a resting place in the house of a pastor on the outskirts of the city. The first thing that greeted them as they entered the house was a Japanese scroll with the words: "Fear not. Be anxious for nothing. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God."

This was the situation when I got back to Japan a few weeks later. Naturally there were many things to occupy one's attention: relief work, reconstruction work, and all the thrill of work in a new diocese, whose Japanese bishop had been consecrated amid the ruins. An advertisement was put in the newspapers immediately, announcing temporary headquarters and inviting members to communicate. The earthquake and fire had destroyed all the publishing houses and bookshops in Tokyo, so a flying visit was paid to a big Christian book-store in the west of Japan, and the foundations of the new library were laid. An interview with the bishop, Dr. Motoda, found him wholly sympathetic, and at his suggestion a meeting of the clergy was called to consider the future of the work, and a small organizing committee appointed to help get things going.

Now three principles had come home to me as a result of the experiment in Hiroshima. The first was the necessity of having the full backing of the Church. In Hiroshima the work had been primarily a missionary activity; no mention was made of the Church until such a time as the correspondence suggested ripe. The result was a

certain lack of interest on the part of the Church itself. In beginning again we decided to emphasize the Church connexion. The very title of the office was changed to the Seikokai New Life Hall; the literature stressed the importance of Church affiliation.

In the second place, it was obvious that the work could not be the activity of a single society or a single school of thought. So far as societies are concerned we have not got as far as we have hoped. From the societies working in Japan, the help, though generous, has been irregular, with the exception of that from the Church Missionary Society, which has sponsored the work from the beginning. But valuable assistance has come from the S.P.C.K. and the R.T.S. From the first the responsible committee has been thoroughly representative, and has served to show how non-divisive in the mission field are those viewpoints which often receive undue emphasis at home. While naturally the work has been in the main associated with our Church, yet it has been our policy from the first to introduce inquirers to other Churches in such places where our own Church does not exist. In a non-Christian land some form of corporate Christian life is essential.

The third principle was that the work should be linked to existing Church activities, by emphasis on membership in the organized Church, and by the production of nearly all literature by the Church Publishing Society or some kindred body.

We were now ready to go ahead.

The articles in the papers would produce requests

for more information; how were these requests to be handled? Motives must be considered, and how these motives should be stimulated. One motive is curiosity. Literature therefore must be provided which will satisfy that curiosity and kindle a desire to learn more. To this end we planned a series of tracts known as the "New Life Series," each pamphlet containing a list of all the others. These pamphlets were designed to reach different types of people, e.g. educated, uneducated, young people, country folk, women and the like. In addition there were pamphlets for people with special difficulties, e.g. sufferers, mourners, those puzzled with the relation between science and faith, those worried over sex-problems. The last-named tract is a Japanization of Streeter's *Moral Adventure*.¹ These tracts would help to satisfy the curiosity, but the more important thing was to stimulate the desire to go on.

The centre of the follow-up work is the New Life Society, a society for the further study of Christianity. It demands certain membership fees and offers certain privileges. We had found in Hiroshima that if the fees were too low, applicants joined at once as a token of their gratitude for the literature sent, but they had no intention of going further. Accordingly, in Tokyo we raised the fees, and extended the minimum period of membership, in order to make sure of our man when we got him. Incidentally, such a plan has put the work among the members on a more or less self-supporting basis.

¹ English edition published by the Student Christian Movement Press.

One of the privileges of membership is the monthly magazine *New Life*, which, by its variety of appeal, has a better chance of satisfying curiosity, while its publication monthly provides continuity. At first we sent every inquirer a copy of one of the Gospels with a specimen magazine, but latterly a pamphlet entitled *The Words of New Life*, based on the book *Highways of the Spirit*,¹ and containing selected Scripture readings for a month. A direct result of this has been a doubling of the orders for copies of the Bible. As a means of stimulating systematic Bible study, we have two Bible Courses, one of a hundred weeks on the Bible, and one of forty weeks on the Gospels. A special feature of them is that the reader can start in at any time and get a consecutive course of study.

Another bait is the Circulating Library, for which we ask extra fees. An annotated catalogue is provided, and also one dealing with the hundred best books. There is a section on rural problems, which serves to show that we are interested in temporal needs as well as spiritual.

From the first our aim has been to get inquirers linked on to the Church; but there is often no local church to which they may be introduced. Accordingly, two of us composed a Correspondence Course, a task which occupied the spare time of four years.

We assume that the student knows nothing about Christianity, but is genuinely desirous of learning. His religious background is non-Christian, and in all probability religion does not have a very vital connexion with his life and character. We further

¹ Student Christian Movement Press.

assume that his idea of God is vague and impersonal. Our aim is not only to give him a good understanding of what the Christian religion is, but also to lead him into a living faith in Jesus Christ as his God and Saviour and Lord.

The first chapter discusses in a simple way the nature of God and the importance of religious faith as a thing affecting a man's whole life. Nothing is said directly about Christianity, though the thought is implicitly Christian all through. The reason for this approach is to guide his mind to right thinking, to strengthen him in his intention to persevere, and to undermine wrong religious ideas which, if not corrected, may vitiate a good deal of subsequent study. The eight weeks that follow are a study of the character of Jesus Christ, His joy, His sympathy, His courage, His indignation, His self-control, His personal influence, His sincerity and His call. We are frankly indebted to Fosdick's *Manhood of the Master*¹ for the idea. The aim of this section is threefold: to help the student to feel the attractiveness of our Lord, to bring home to him his own shortcomings when placed beside such a standard, and thirdly to enable him to discover the significance of Jesus Christ as the revelation of God. Was it not this method which our Lord Himself followed with His disciples? It has been interesting to find that by the end of this section, practically without exception, the student has made the great discovery for himself.

The next thing is to go on and show him our Lord's significance. To this end the next five weeks

¹ Student Christian Movement Press.

are devoted to a study of what Jesus Christ Himself had to say about God, sin, and redemption. This section is the kernel of the course, and by the end of it, with the Holy Spirit's help, the student should have entered for himself into the Christian experience of salvation. The rest of the course assumes such an experience, and is devoted a week at a time to a study of the significance of New Life, the Holy Spirit, the maintenance of the Christian life, the Kingdom of God, and the Church; while the final chapter is a detailed exposition of the Anglican service for baptism.

Each day's course consists of an opening prayer—remember, the student has probably never prayed in a Christian sense before—a portion of Scripture for study, a short explanation of the same, a question for meditation, and a closing prayer. Special emphasis is laid on the question, so as to encourage the student to think. At the end of each week there is a further set of questions on the week's studies, and these have to be answered and sent in to the New Life Hall. Not until the answers show that the student has grasped the underlying ideas of the week's study is the following week's course sent to him. Though the course is nominally one of twenty weeks, yet, as a rule, by the time he has finished satisfactorily the best part of a year has elapsed. Our experience has, on the whole, unquestionably vindicated the line followed. Special care is taken that only those shall be enrolled who show a genuine desire to go on, and who are prevented from attending church.

The final literature provided is the weekly

Service and Sermon by post, for inquirers and Christians cut off from corporate means of grace. By this means it is possible to start in different places "a church in the house of" Tanaka or Suzuki or whoever it may be. The responsibility for this has now been taken over by the Church Publishing Society.

In the follow-up work as in all other branches, the newspaper evangelist is indebted to the foresight of Dr. Pieters, who experimented along most of these lines.

Naturally, preparation could not be done quickly, and it was not until sixteen months after the earthquake that, on Christmas Day, 1924, we felt justified in making a beginning. We decided to publish an article in two of the big dailies on the subject of Christmas, ending with the usual invitation to correspond. By printing the invitation in non-display type it would be possible to guarantee that those who applied had read the article beforehand. They would not, like the English schoolboy, send in an application because the goods were advertised free!

The first article in the *Tokyo Nichinichi Newspaper* was by the Rev. M. S. Murao, destined eventually to take the lead in this work. It showed how the Incarnation brought harmony to the discord of a troubled world. The second in the *Hochi Newspaper* was by a man who had spent his whole life among the poor. He told the story of the birth of a baby in a Tokyo slum, and then spoke of another Baby born in a manger. Bishop Motoda reckoned we would get 30 applications: we got 300;

200 from the *Nichinichi* and 100 from the *Hochi*. These figures suggested that with the former paper lay our greater hope.

It was not until March of the following year that we were ready to begin a systematic campaign. Accordingly, armed with an introduction, we sought an interview with the head of the advertising department of the *Tokyo Nichinichi*. The ordinary advertising rates of that paper were 2s. 1d. a line, and we knew that if we had to pay that our advertising would be on a meagre scale. We found that the head had just returned from England, was conversant with the religious articles in the English press, and though not a professing Christian himself, had a Christian family, and was wholly in sympathy with our idea. We left with rates fixed at 11½d. a line, rather less than half.

A year or two later, when, as a result of the articles, we had received something like eight thousand applications, we secured an interview with the president of the paper, Mr. Motoyama. He was very surprised at our report on the response to the articles, and perhaps more so when we followed it up with a request for free space. But he promised to give the matter his sympathetic consideration. The reply came shortly after: he could not give free space, for if he gave it to the representatives of one religion, he would be inundated with requests from others, but he would give us certain rates of a nominal character. Further, he announced his intention of starting a religious column in his Osaka paper. This result alone made the interview worth while, for in a

paper with a circulation over a million, a religious column in which Christians get a generous share is not to be despised. Some years later this column was discontinued, but it had become so popular that in response to readers' requests it was resumed. When a general rise was made in advertising rates the New Life Hall rates were left unchanged by Mr. Motoyama's express orders.

In the meantime, another central paper, the *Yomiuri*, with a circulation of about 400,000, and specializing in articles on literature and art, started a daily religious column with a part-time editor, a Christian, in charge. Close relations were established at once, and now a short inset advertisement appears every other day in the actual column. In addition a link has been made between that paper and the Far and Near Press Bureau in England in connexion with the International Missionary Council, which is capable of considerable development.

In 1930 a further step was taken by the insertion of a Christian article in a popular woman's monthly, *The Housewife's Friend*, again at nominal rates. This produces a steady stream of applications, chiefly from the housewife's male friends!

Finally, arrangements were made with the purveyors of one of the best-known patent medicines in the country by which each packet of the ointment contains a short notice of Christianity inviting people to apply for "heart medicine." The result has been satisfactory, except when people take the words literally!

When Mr. Motoyama gave us his answer he invited us to use, on similar terms, his Osaka

paper, the *Osaka Mainichi*, which shares with the *Osaka Asahi* the honour of being the biggest newspaper in Japan. At the special invitation of the Bishop of Osaka, Dr. Naidé, and his clergy, and through the generosity of the S.P.C.K., we were able to make a beginning, but the response was so large that it was impossible to handle it, and it was discontinued. But in 1931 a fresh venture was made for three successive weeks which produced over a thousand applications. Finally, from May, 1932, regular articles have been started, which are followed up by different Churches in co-operation.

In 1930 the Seikokai New Life Hall became a father. The child, which has developed rapidly ever since, and is now a most active youth, is in Niigata prefecture in north-west Japan, and is supported by the Missionary Society of the Canadian Church, though it works in closest co-operation with the Seikokai. In Niigata only the local papers are used, but they vie with one another in their anxiety to get the articles. All applicants in that area, as a result of the articles in the central papers, are transferred to the Niigata office, which in turn uses the monthly magazine and introduces its members to the central library. The arrangement has worked admirably, and the Rev. H. G. Watts, who is now in charge, has met with continuous encouragement from the first. As the number of his applicants are far fewer, he is able to send to each a personal letter, so that a considerably larger percentage take the next step of joining the New Life Society.

In the year following, the Nagano Seikokai office

was established in central Japan, in alliance with the local Methodist office. The two Churches more or less cover the prefecture between them, so it has not been difficult to divide the territory according to the principles of comity. In the cities where they overlap, the odd numbers go to one Church, the even numbers to the other.

The latest step has been the introduction of a system by which each applicant is asked to send 10 sen (2d.) for a specimen copy of *New Life*, and in return is promised a free copy of a book by Kagawa. The result has been what we hoped, a slight decrease in the number of applications and a considerable increase both in the number and the percentage of the joining members. The small fee has resulted in our tapping a more serious type of inquirer.

This is the latest stage which the work has reached. It is a growing, active organization, in which changes are continually being made as fresh experience is acquired. Indeed, one of the fascinations of this work is that it opens endless fields to the pioneer. We never can tell what is going to be the next development!

CHAPTER IV

A CHAPTER OF ARTICLES

THE weekly article is the spear head of Newspaper Work. In the early days we reproduced chapter by chapter a book by a well-known evangelist. It served to give a consecutive presentation of Christianity, but suffered from being a serial and not being written specially for newspapers.

In Tokyo we published at first a series of articles dealing with living issues, e.g. The Christian Ideal of Love and Marriage, The Christian Home, Christianity and Modern Problems of Society, and the like. These ran generally to a column or a column and a half and produced a large response. One series by the present Bishop of Tokyo on The Philosophy of Worry brought in over a thousand requests.

But experience has taught us that shorter articles are more widely read and secure as many applications. This is psychologically sound. No person will read a long article on a subject in which he is only mildly interested. The important thing is to give just enough to whet his appetite for more. We also learnt that the writing of an article is an art in itself. In view of these conditions, the articles

latterly have been almost invariably by the Rev. M. S. Murao.

It may be of interest to give a translation of the article which led to our connexion with the *Tokyo Nichinichi Newspaper*, and which of itself produced over two hundred applications. It is typical of the somewhat intellectual appeal which is a feature of nearly all Japanese evangelistic preaching. It ran as follows:

“THE TRUE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS

“The whole purpose of life can be summed up in the quest for harmony. Co-operation between capital and labour, integrity in administration, the provision of work for unemployed and of land for immigrants—all these things are nothing but the quest for harmony. Virtue and the solution of life’s problems can be said to be the quest for peace and harmony in the mind. When there is harmony between truth and the universe, the wisdom of humanity leads to discovery and scientific invention. When man’s power of life harmonizes with his environment we have what is known as civilization. Every problem, individual, domestic, social, national, human, and universal, can be solved by finding harmony.

“Harmony among the members of an orchestra is secured by the baton of the conductor. In the same way all the problems of human life can be solved by the securing of harmony between the human and the cosmic personality, which is God.

"We call everything which prevents this harmony sin. Consequently we can trace all the struggles, troubles, confusions, and tragedies of human life to sin.

"When there is a lack of harmony in the orchestra it causes pain not only to the individual members who compose it, but also and still more so to the conductor. In the same way in a world of sin men suffer for the lack of harmony, but the One who feels it most of all is the One who is at the heart of the universe, God Himself.

"We now proclaim that God on His own initiative took steps to get rid of sin, and that the birth of Jesus, who is the cosmic principle and the representative purpose of the whole world and humanity, is evidence of this intention. To believe that Jesus is God, who has revealed Himself as man, is to believe that love is the central truth of the universe. Not only His teaching, but His life and death and His spiritual activity after His death show forth that God is love. Only love can take away sin, and this true love which can give harmony to humanity is in Christ.

"It is only right that the day of His birth, the festival of Christmas, should be celebrated by the whole world as a most joyous day. But only those who believe in Christ in this way can keep Christmas in the true sense."

We must remember that what seems very ordinary to us may seem very original to Eastern readers. The last of the four articles on The Christ-

ian Ideal of Love and Marriage by the late Rev. P. K. Goto, one of the most popular missionaries in Japan, ran as follows :

“ CHRISTIANITY AND TRUE MARRIAGE

“ The traditional religions of Japan haven't much to say about marriage. For instance, Buddhism regarded marriage as a sin, and forbade it to those who would follow the highest ideal. It gave no blessing to it. In Shinto there were gods of match-making but nothing more. It provided no religious ceremony in a marriage nor set an ideal before those who were getting married. Christianity is the first religion in Japan to invest marriage with a deep religious significance and make it a thing to be entered into with the blessing of God and His Church. This is due to the teaching of Christ, which regarded love as a sacred thing.

“ There is no meaning in a marriage which can be easily broken or in a love which can be separated just as easily as it can be joined together. Only a marriage on the basis of Christ's saying : ‘ Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder,’ a marriage which will know no divorce, can produce real happiness. No true love can be produced in a couple when the man thinks he can divorce his wife at will and the woman never knows when she may be divorced. Real marriage should be one in which God has joined the man and woman together. Such a marriage should only be entered into after mutual

understanding and frank discussion about health and family. There should be a unity of ideals and faith. There is no blessing on a marriage which is brought about by concealing the truth or by the tricks of the go-between, or which is based solely on the idea of property or position. Although it is necessary to get the approval of one's elders, marriage should be rooted in an understanding between the parties concerned. It should only be entered upon after a full understanding of the merits and demerits of both parties.

"The two persons concerned should then promise lifelong fidelity before God in some such words as—(here follow the well-known words of plighting the troth in the prayer book service). This will mean a real marriage based on mutual trust. To live together while the mood allowed, and to separate when the mood changed—a sort of free love which, when it found that the wife did not fit in with the traditions of the family, drove her out—this was no marriage. It was only living together for a time. In such a life no true trust or love can exist.

"Those, therefore, who desire to have a happy home should be married in accordance with Christian ideals."

At the present time the articles are shorter and more topical, and with the cross in the corner can be easily spotted. The subjects are often of a seasonal character, e.g. the following, which appeared another Christmas Day:

" CHRISTMAS

" In front of Umeda Station in Osaka there stands a row of shops which sell millet cakes. But the cakes on show in the open windows are only wooden ones covered with millet seed. One day a hungry young man from the country gave way to a sudden temptation and snatched up one of them and bolted. The astonished shopkeeper shouted after him that they were only make-believe, but he was in far too great a hurry to look back.

" In Japan to-day Christmas Day has become more or less of an institution, but most people keep it in outward form only. They don't get the good from inside. For Christmas is really the day on which to remember God's Son, who came as a man among us, and by doing so brought about a new relationship between God our Father and us men in all our misery and weakness. It is because of this fact that we keep Christmas with such joy.

" People, therefore, who keep Christmas without knowing Jesus Christ are like the young man who thought to satisfy his hunger with a wooden millet cake."

At the season of the flowers, always a time of great festivity in Japan, the following appeared:

" BEING IN GOOD SPIRITS FOR THE FLOWERS

" Merely looking at flowers doesn't make one's heart happy. It is a heart which is happy already

which really enjoys looking at flowers. People still continue to be unhappy in spite of flowers. Suicides still take place.

“If a man wants to enjoy to the full the beautiful spring days with which Nature decorates herself he must get rid of the troubles in his heart first of all. These troubles come from sin. There is no way to get rid of sin except through the strength which comes from God through Jesus Christ.

“If I and my fellow-creatures really want to enjoy the flowers as they burst forth from the bud, we must believe in God and in Christ.”

At the end of the summer holidays we had :

“THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS ARE OVER !

“It has been said that Westerners take holidays in order to work, and that we Easterners work in order to take holidays. Whether this be actually true or not nobody will deny that rest is very important as a source of strength. When a man throws himself whole-heartedly into his work, he has no cause for grumbling or discontent. But in order to make a strong effort of this kind it is necessary to take a strong rest. We need, in fact, ‘the peace of God which passeth understanding’; we need to get that fundamental spiritual peace which faith alone gives.”

With the approach of autumn we printed :

“AUTUMN HAS COME !

“Autumn has come! that season when the

days grow shorter and we can spend the evenings quietly in meditation and reading.

“There is no need to apologize for saying that reading is one of the most enjoyable things that there is. But it demands care. Choosing what to read is just as important as choosing a friend.

“The Bible, which has been used to purify the souls of men for many generations, should be found at such a time as this beside everybody’s desk. It is not only a book to read, but also one to meditate over. Indeed it provokes meditation of itself, and so is a good companion to have for the long winter evenings.”

On the Sunday before Armistice Day, 1931, we had an article which unconsciously reflected the Japanese attitude towards a state of affairs which we in the West are too ready to accept as finally settled:

“ARMISTICE DAY

“Armistice Day has come at a time when both Japan and the world are facing a great crisis.

“But peace as such has no meaning, and is of but little benefit to mankind if it means nothing more than the preservation of the *status quo*. Real peace means giving access to the means of life and the right to possess it to all nations. But such a peace can only come when the whole world believes in one God of the universe, the Father of all. We must therefore take the first step to this end by realizing that purpose for ourselves.”

Some of the articles are linked on to some event in the previous week, as, for example, when the world-wide depression first began to make itself felt in Japan. On that occasion we had:

“ WORLD-WIDE DEPRESSION

“ The sun, the air, water and things like them belong to the whole world. Neither Japan nor any nation regards them in any way as things which they can keep to themselves. In the same way the present wave of economic depression has become a world-wide matter; even Japan cannot escape the sufferings which it brings.

“ Once we realize that the relationship of man's heart to the material world is not a thing confined to Japan alone, it follows that the spiritual problem likewise is not confined to Japan only. In other words, there is no justification for saying that the religion of Japan should be a Japanese religion. It is necessary to get hold of a world-wide religion and then apply it to the special needs of Japan. Otherwise the heart of Japan will never be saved. The only world-wide religion is the way of Christ.”

Or again when the railway authorities announced a general speeding up of express trains we had:

“ THE AGE OF SPEED

“ Quicker! Quicker! It is the age of speed. It is an age which thinks that a thing only has

meaning if it goes fast. But you people of the present day, who talk so much about speed—what purpose has speed, after all? Whither are you bound? Your hard work, your busy-ness, what is it all about? What is it all for? Oughtn't you to ask questions of that kind? If the grave is the end of all things, oughtn't you to speak a little less about speed?

“The world which does not believe in God, which does not believe in Christ—oh! how lonely it is.”

Again, when there was considerable agitation in the press that Japan should withdraw from the League of Nations on account of its attitude on the Manchurian question, we printed :

“GIVING UP LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

“Japan, by withdrawing from the League of Nations, may be freed from responsibility for, and a duty towards, its decisions. But some people think with regard to the question : Shall I believe in God or not? that if they simply withdraw they can escape all obligations.

“But this is a very ‘dangerous thought.’ A country can exist whether there be a League or not, but no man could live a day if there were no God.

“The result of believing or rejecting God is seen in a man's daily life. A man cannot really do without faith in God.”

When the anti-religious movement was launched

and secured a good deal of publicity, we published an article which secured an enormous response. It ran as follows:

“THE OVERTHROW OF RELIGION

“When you can persuade men not to like fine clothes, when you can educate them to dislike tasty food, you will then be able to destroy religion, but not before.

“The religion which should be destroyed is the skeleton of the real thing. Christianity has already destroyed many such.

“But Christianity itself, despite the fiercest persecutions, has lived on to this present day. This is because it is true.”

From time to time we have had articles on more exclusively religious subjects, for example, on the fundamentals of Christianity. These articles elicited as big a response as the more topical ones. One of them, which secured two hundred applications, ran as follows:

“GOD IS PURE

“God detests impurity. By impurity we mean not only that of a physical or material character, but also that of a spiritual.

“There are some people who think that it is far safer both for God and for human beings if men do not have too intimate a relationship with Him, because He hates impurity. But this is a

terrible mistake. It is true that He hates impurity, especially sin, but at the same time it is only He who has the power to cleanse it. Therefore, in order that men may get rid of sin, it is necessary that He draw near to them, and they to Him. Only then will they secure freedom from their sin.

“We declare that this relationship between God and us men is possible through faith in Jesus Christ.”

These examples should suffice to show the nature of the articles. They are now coming to be regarded as a regular feature of the *Nichinichi*. Indeed, the mere mention of them on our part to people who subscribe to the paper is sufficient introduction.

The important thing to remember is that the articles stand for a different set of ideals from those commonly accepted, and that both by their character and the cross which marks them are definitely associated in the public mind with Christianity, and as such have a more peculiar appeal than in lands where Christian thought has sunk deeper. Time alone will show the permanent value of this propaganda, but the correspondence which it produces enables us to gauge its more immediate effect. This correspondence will form the theme of succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER V

A DAY'S CORRESPONDENCE

THE articles in the newspapers bring in an enormous response. The Seikokai New Life Hall on an average sends out a hundred packages or letters a day all the year round. One interesting thing which this correspondence has revealed is that a Japanese is far readier to state his religious difficulties by letter than by word of mouth. He will talk on religion in general as much as a Cambridge undergraduate, but when you get down to personal matters he is as reserved as the proverbial Englishman. But he sheds this reserve when he takes up his pen or brush. I have found also that correspondence is an excellent preparation for a personal visit. It serves to eliminate many of the preliminaries so dear to the heart of a Japanese.

It may be of interest, however, to take a typical day's correspondence at random, and, in doing so, make an imaginary tour round the postquake "barrack"¹ building, the New Life Hall. The day selected is September 1st, 1931, the eighth anniversary of the disaster, though there is no special reason why this day should have been chosen, and, indeed, before making the analysis, we have no idea what it will reveal.

¹ The term used in Tokyo for temporary buildings put up after the earthquake.

The article the previous Sunday has been: "The Summer Holidays are Over!" reproduced in the previous chapter.

We will visit first the clerk responsible for the preliminary correspondence, Mr. K. Tamai, himself a fruit of the Newspaper Work. He reports that fifty-two applications have come in, from Hokkaido the northern island to Yamaguchi prefecture in the extreme west, the scene of Xavier's labours, two places over a thousand miles apart. They come from twenty-one of the forty-seven prefectures into which Japan is divided. To each applicant suitable literature will be dispatched, together with a letter inviting him to get into touch with the local church, or to join the New Life Society. Let us look at two of these applications. The first is from a man living in a proverbially strong Buddhist area. He writes:

"I have just this moment seen your article in the *Nichinichi* for the first time. I am a student who has got a very happy home. I have been through the Middle (i.e. secondary) School, and managed to survive the 'examination hell' (i.e. the nickname for the examination system in Japan), and have passed into the Higher School (i.e. the school preparatory to entering the university; we have no equivalent in England). But now I have suddenly met with misfortune and have had to leave school, and have had to go out to work for my living. I have now seen society as it is with all its sin, and I am very miserable; please save me."

This letter is typical of many. Having to give up

a university education is much more serious in Japan than in the West, as a man's *curriculum vitae* counts for everything.

The second letter comes from a woman in a northern city and runs as follows:

"I am a girl who is sixteen this year. On account of certain home circumstances I am leading a very unhappy life every day. I recently borrowed the magazine *The Housewife's Friend* from a friend and happened to see your article in it. At all costs, and as soon as possible, tell me how to be saved and to make my home bright. When I was a little child I went to church and heard something about God, but my father and mother know nothing whatever. I want to lead them as quickly as possible into a day-by-day thanksgiving to God. Please help me."

In special cases such as this we invariably send a short personal letter instead of the usual printed one.

We will now pass on to the Library, where Mr. Endo, once a Marxian now a Christian, is in charge. He has four letters on his desk, the first from a man two hundred miles north of Tokyo, a farmer who is hard up and ill—all farmers are hard up nowadays. He is eight miles from the nearest church and never has a free Sunday, so he is looking to books for the light. He asks for a Christian biography and a devotional book. He has already read *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Sky Pilot*, and two of Kagawa's books, as well as one from our special rural section. The next applicant was baptized only a month ago. He is lame but covers the four miles to church on a

bicycle. He has also got a flourishing Sunday school in his home. Then there is a request from a woman worker in a remote part of north Japan. She cannot afford to buy books, so is all the more glad to have our library. Finally, there is a new member who lives in a county where there is not a single church, but who is evidently very much in earnest, judging by the books he has chosen. We enrolled him in our Correspondence Course a month or two later, and he is now well on the way to baptism.¹

Before we pass on to the correspondence of the New Life Society members we will glance at the desk of the clerk employed by the Japan Christian News Agency, whose office is in the Hall. He has just dispatched some fifty syndicated articles to the Japanese press for release next week. They are on: "The Universal Mind and the Religious Mind," and have been written by one of the leading younger Congregational clergy, a delegate to the Jerusalem Meeting in 1928. It deals with relations between Japan and China from a Christian standpoint, and will serve to show that Christianity has something to say on affairs of common concern.

The next desk is occupied by Mr. K. Matsubara, my colleague in the slums of east Tokyo. He used to be an elementary school-teacher, but resigned his position, put himself through the three years of the Theological College on his savings, and is now working with much acceptance in an area which was entirely wiped out by the earthquake. He gives one-third of his time to the Newspaper Work. He

¹ For a later letter from him see p. 128.

is in charge of the Correspondence Course, and also of the Service and Sermon by post. Two sets of answers have come in. The first is from a girl of twenty-two living twelve miles away from the nearest woman worker. She is nursing a sick uncle and aunt. After her father's death her mother deserted her and her five brothers and sisters and ran away with another man, so life has been a pretty grim struggle. She said in her first letter that all was dark: can you wonder? We are now out to introduce her to Jesus Christ. A few months later she called on us one day to tell us that she had been received as a catechumen, the preliminary step to baptism.

The other letter is from a merchant of twenty-four, living in the same churchless county referred to above. He had read one or two Christian books, but had also got interested in Marxism and was anxious to know whether God really existed. He is now nearing the central portion of the course, the message of the Cross, and has just sent in his answer to the question: "What reasons would you adduce for belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" What does he say?

" . . . The reason why I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is what I have seen in His life and character. In the earthly life of Jesus Christ there was nothing which was not natural, and yet He was always in communion with God. His faith was not anything imposed upon Him by man, nor was it a thing that was done from a mere sense of duty—'You must

believe because you ought to'—nor was it a mere matter of form as is the case with Japanese religions. It was something perfectly free and yet it was a firm and unshaken trust.

"The Lord Jesus Christ regarded God as a loving and righteous personality, and He looked upon this characteristic as a normal thing for a child of God, and taught men accordingly. For this reason He never had any use for such a thing as 'accommodated truth' (i.e. a statement made not because it is true but because it will help, a common feature of Buddhism).

"He was ever the friend of sinners and the poor and the oppressed. In these things He was very different from the Buddhists.

"As we think over such a life and character, and in addition remember that His teaching is a gospel for all people, as we think of Him as the Saviour of mankind, we must believe that He is truly the Son of God."

Not a bad answer for a man with no more than an elementary school education. It was to be my privilege to baptize him nine months later.

We now pass on to my late secretary and colleague, Mr. Ninomiya, who handles the members' correspondence. He reports two new members, one in a town thirty miles west of Tokyo, the other in a city in the far north. They have sent in their fees by the Postal Transfer System, a thing we have not yet got in England. They are probably young men judging by their handwriting, but we will soon find out when they return their Personal Record Forms.

Among other postal transfer forms is one for 2½d. from a Middle School student, taking our monthly instalment Bible Study Course. He has secured his non-Christian parents' consent to his becoming a Christian worker, though he is not yet a Christian! But we have got him linked on to the local country church, and ere many more weeks have passed he will be baptized. Then there is a gift of 4s. sent in by another inquirer, a sailor, who feels the need of helping somebody, and sends this every month to help put a girl through the medical schools. It is entirely his own idea and he has left the selection to us, and we have got Kagawa to choose her.

Now for some of the members' letters. The first is from a Middle School master and graduate of the Imperial University, who wrote first asking for advice as to how to improve his character. I saw the pastor of the city in which he lived some months later, and he told me he was coming along well and should be baptized by the following Christmas.

Here's a complaint: "Last month's magazine never arrived, etc." We looked up our card index; it was sent all right. Then we looked at the letter again. The man had changed his address and had never let us know. That's soon rectified.

Now come an interesting group of letters, the first from a young fellow of twenty-one, anxious to become a Christian, but still puzzled over the demands of the old religions. I wrote to ask him if he had thought more about getting into touch with the nearest church five miles away, to which I had offered to introduce him. His reply is:

"The truth is that I am simply longing to go to church and meet the pastor and have a talk with him, to tell him all my troubles and ask him various things about faith, but I am down with consumption and have not the courage to make the effort to go so far. The only thing to do is to wait.

"I am trying to start a temperance movement in my village, and have got out a magazine, *The Friend of the Countryside*, in which I write articles on the subject, but so far I have nobody else to help me. But I will keep on, even for ten or twenty years if necessary."

We were able to get the pastor to call on him later on, and so the living link was established.

But talking about grit, what about this letter? It comes from a nurse who is carrying on despite the fact that she has got incipient consumption herself; she is the one means of support for her aged parents. She says:

"Thank you so much for your kind letter. I would indeed like to go to Akaho church as you suggest, but I have been quite ill of late, and had to get the people in the house to help me, instead of helping myself, a thing which has worried me very much. On account of my present condition I feel that I am causing a great deal of worry in this house, and though I want to keep on with my work even if I die, yet my body is so weak that I cannot. I ought really to give up and go home, but my parents are so poor that I dare not be a

burden to them, so the only thing to do is to carry on with God's help."

I was able to get her later into the Garden Home in Tokyo, that bit of Christlike work for consumptives started by an English lady, herself an invalid. There she found Christ. The first time that I saw her it was rather pathetic. The Home seemed to be about the first place which she had ever been in which radiated with the love of Christ, and there was a sort of frightened expression about her, as if to say: Can it really all be true? She was later baptized, and the change in her life was a joy to behold.

Then a country girl writes to tell us of her decision to go to church:

"I am still in the kindergarten stage, so I feel very shy about going, but I have made up my mind to ask for an introduction, so please send me one. I am living in the country where there are no conveniences and it means a journey of eight miles, and in addition, because of home circumstances, I may not be able to go regularly, but please send the introduction."

Our reply is to tell her of another young country person about eight miles away from the same church, whom we introduced some years ago, and who is now a keen Christian. Who knows? Some day they may get married! For pastors arrange such things in Japan, not the individuals concerned—but this last thought was not in my letter!

The next letter is from an old sea-captain of forty-three with whom we have been in touch for

several years, and who has taken the greater part of the Correspondence Course. He is an invalid, and till recently has been living in a small fishing village far from any church. But he has now moved into a town and we have got him linked on to the local Presbyterian church. He writes to say that there is an inquirers' class which he is attending regularly. I cannot but quote a letter which we received from him a few months later. He wrote:

"Thank you for your letter of joy to me on hearing of my baptism and entry upon new life as a member of Christ. During the long years while I have been convalescing I have been deeply grateful to you. Now I have almost recovered, and at the end of last year was able to marry again, and so I am once more enjoying the comfort of home life. My faith is one which has been realized through much adversity, and so my experience of God is a very real thing. I want to go on more and more to become a real servant of Jesus Christ."

Then we have a letter from a young fellow in a restaurant in northern Japan, who speaks of the weekly church service as the most valuable thing in his life, and who has already got a group of his friends also under instruction. When first he wrote he had dozens of questions; now he asks how to make more time for prayer and Bible study.

Here's the best letter of all, telling of a young fellow's baptism and his new joy in service, especially in open air preaching.

Then comes a letter from a schoolmaster nine hundred miles away who used to be a materialist till he went down with consumption and had to go into hospital. There he awoke to the loneliness and hopelessness of it all. We suggested that a visit from the local pastor might help. He replies:

“Thank you for your letter. I am glad to say that my illness is much better. I have been wanting to go to church, but have not been able to do so as yet. Indeed, my faith has tended to grow cold. But at all costs I want to go soon to the Church of the Resurrection, and will be glad of your help.”

I was able to call on him a few weeks later and found him very sincere in his search. He has since left the hospital and removed to another part of the country, where he has been introduced to the local church.

Finally there is a letter from the elder brother of Fusé Hatako, “Mary of Bethany,” that rare spirit whose story is told in *Japan and Christ*.¹ She has passed over since the story was written, but her brother and mother are now inquirers. Indeed the old mother, who has been a lifelong and devout Buddhist, in her ignorance and her sincerity has substituted for the image of the Buddha on the god-shelf a picture of the Christ.

And so a day’s correspondence draws to a close. It is sufficient to show how infinitely worth while it all is.

¹ Murao and Walton, *Japan and Christ*, p. 156. Published by C.M.S. Price 2s. 6d.

CHAPTER VI

A BUNDLE OF LETTERS

ONE of the thrills of the Newspaper Work is that you never know what the next letter may contain and from what kind of person it may come. It may be from a murderer in prison or a man contemplating suicide, or a woman at her wit's end because of her husband's conduct, or a youth driven desperate by the wrongs of society and the persecution of the police. We get letters asking our advice on every conceivable subject, often from people who have nowhere else to turn. Many of these letters are of too private a nature ever to see the light, but we will give a selection which will perhaps show something of the joys and opportunities of this work. For the sake of convenience we will divide them under two heads, those from seekers and those from finders.

The first one is reproduced because of its typical character. It is from a person remote from any church and runs as follows:

“I am at present living far away in the heart of the country. I used to live in a town where

there was a church with evening service and a Sunday school, to which I used to go occasionally. But now I am right away in the country, far from any church, and it is very lonely. You will understand, therefore, my joy at seeing your article in the newspaper on Christmas Day offering to send free literature. Please let me have some without fail."

Most of the applications come from the country districts. The following letter gives a good idea of conditions such as they are to-day :

" Please forgive me for not writing for so long, as I have really no excuse. Thank you for sending me the specimen copy of *New Life*. I thank you for all you have done to help so unworthy a soul as mine. The God of limitless love, through my teacher, Mr. Murray, has brought me into the way of salvation from death to life, from wrong to a sense of good, from dissatisfaction to thanksgiving.

" On account of the present bad economic conditions my house is now reduced to poverty. Up till now, in my selfishness I have had a mistaken outlook on life, but through the Lord's guidance I have been led to face spiritual things. Since I got home I have read my daily portion but very little else.

" By reason of the general depression I have taken up the cultivation of silk-worms, but the silk market to-day is in a desperate condition. Farmers, though they are called by that title, can-

not afford to keep for themselves more than five or six months' supply of food; for the rest of the time they have to supplement things by cultivating silk-worms or by other similar trades. But on account of the lowness of prices they can only produce silk once or twice a year instead of three times. As a result, conditions of life have got so bad that we have to struggle as never before. In this village, if one house goes bankrupt the rest will follow. The family will have to be broken up and things will get very serious.

"For this reason those of us who have a chance of doing something extra do so day and night. Our house does fishing in order to keep things together, and this takes every moment we have. It is for this reason that I have not written before.

"I am afraid that I may not be able to rejoin the New Life Society next month. I feel that it is very sad that on account of the suffering of life I cannot do work for God. But I am trying to do something to lead the men of my village to Christ."

The writer of this letter was baptized not many months after. Since he wrote conditions have got even worse; one result has been a considerable increase in the sale of girls to the immoral quarters.

Family opposition can be a very real thing, as the following letter shows:

"With regard to the information which you have sent my second son, please note that we have been Buddhists for many generations and detest

Christianity, and regard it as a certain cause of disunion in our home between my son and his parents. It is in direct opposition to Buddhism and quarrels are sure to arise, which will mean that my dear son will leave me and his brothers. For a man with such a heritage it would be unfortunate indeed if he were to lapse into Christianity. Please have no further communication with him."

Nevertheless, despite all this mass of tradition, the appeal of the Christ is a very real thing to some seekers. One wrote in as follows:

"Up till now I have been a man who has wanted to know something about Christianity, but as I am living in the country, all I know about the Bible is by hearsay, and who Christ is—I know nothing.

"Nevertheless I somehow have had a feeling of attraction for Christ. The more I have seen of the sufferings of mankind, the more has this desire grown. But I have no knowledge as to how to satisfy this longing.

"To-day, very unexpectedly, I read about your work in the *Tokyo Nichinichi Newspaper*, in which you say that you will give free information to those who desire it. It is with joy, therefore, that I send you this letter. Please send me tracts to satisfy this unaccountable hope."

Another man who had got hold of a Gospel for the first time wrote as follows:

"I read St. Mark straight through. It seemed

like rice-chaff to me. So I read it again, and then I began to understand it a bit better. Bit by bit my taste for it has got more pronounced, and I have come to know for the first time that Jesus Christ is God's only Son. I believe this. I further believe that by becoming incarnate as a man He is able to heal many of man's illnesses. As Christ died for us on the cross, we should have for ever towards Him a heart of gratitude."

Not a bad result from reading St. Mark!

Some of the letters we get are poignant in their despair.

"As the autumn winds blow with all their feelings of loneliness, I, who am suffering from illness and sin, ask your help. The first part of my life has been one of wandering out of darkness into darkness; can't you help me? I am a soldier and my chief work has been that of physical instruction. In this work I have acquitted myself with credit, yet all the time my mind has been occupied with terrible things. Now that I am ill these memories come crowding in upon me as I lie in my white hospital robe on my bed. This is why my mind is so afflicted at this time. It is the result of my sin. Just now I am suffering terribly, can I escape it? If there is any way by which I can, please show me.

"I had thoughts of writing to you in greater detail, but in my present state of mind and suffering I cannot do so. Every day I think of all I

am going through and pass the long hours on my bed. Please show me the way to be saved. When I saw the advertisement in to-day's paper I felt as if I were alive again. Please show me as quickly as you can the way of salvation. I write this on my lonely bed."

To writers like the above, whenever possible, we arrange for a personal visit, but where that is impossible we send literature written specially for sufferers. Another such wrote as follows:

"I was reading the *Nichinichi* to-day when my eye lighted on your article: 'New Life Discussion.' Just at present I am leading a life of illness in hospital. It is already some months since I came in, and how many more it will be I know not, for I have got pleurisy and fear it may turn to consumption. The path in front of me is utterly dark, and I am just alone in my misery. As I think about things at present, mankind need to rely on somebody who is above them. I want peace in my heart and as I face the future to find the light.

"Up till now I have been an atheist and have not believed in the existence of God. I have not understood what faith is for lack of actual proof. But now, after thinking over things, I feel that I want to enter the faith life. Please let me have some good books, therefore, which are simply written."

It was possible to lead this man to Christ, and later

he offered as a worker, but could not be accepted on account of health grounds.

One letter we received showed something that is going on in the mind of younger Japan at the present time. It ran:

“ I have had a sort of desire of late to enter into Christianity. I have only just finished my day's work, and have been reading the *Yomiuri Newspaper* with your article in the religious column. It is because of it that I send you this letter.

“ You will probably ask why it is that I want to know about Christianity; it is because everything seems upside down. Or to put it in another way, it is because of the loneliness of man's life. In this present age of excessive materialism and selfishness and ‘ calculating-machine ’-ness man's heart is sad indeed.

“ Up till now I have believed in the materialism taught by Marx, and as a result my attitude towards religion, to quote his words, has been that ‘ it is for the bourgeoisie, capitalistic and based on production. ’ Yet I have not assented to this in my heart; indeed, of late, for some reason or other I have been thinking about God. Either the material or the spiritual must triumph; both cannot.

“ For the reasons above my mind is wandering all over the place and I am very unhappy. For one in such a plight as I am, please send me some teaching of Christ's love, which I can understand, so that I may escape from my misery and give

myself to fight for right and humanity. I am writing this at midnight and am very tired."

The above letter was written in one of Tokyo's slums. Another letter, written about the same time, came from one of the Imperial Palaces.

"I have no father and am feeling intensely lonely since I left my mother in her home over a thousand miles away. In my weakness I am feeling very unhappy here. I feel that if the heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, were near to me I might be happier. I know nothing as to what kind of thing Christianity is. I am only seeking to know something more of the Father of love. Please let me come and have a talk with you."

Of course, in every case, we try to link inquirers on to the local church, encouraging them to go and see the nearest pastor rather than visit us. But some of them have a great fear of taking so decisive a step. One such correspondent wrote:

"I live in Saseho (a naval arsenal in west Japan). I have often felt that I must hear about Christianity and have even set out to go to church. But every time I have got to the door my courage has given way and I have not been able to go inside. I am so glad to hear of you, for now I can study and learn at home."

Can she? Yet this fear is very natural. Who of

us would like to be seen going to a Buddhist temple in England in a place where we are well known? It is just the same! But when a link is effected, inquirers generally find that it is not so terrible as they feared.

A still more difficult task is to persuade people to let a pastor visit them when church is impracticable on account of illness. As likely as not, this is due to opposition from the old folk. One man wrote after the first visit as follows :

“ Everything everywhere is bursting with new strength and throbbing with overflowing joy as it waits beneath the warm sun for the coming of spring. I feel as if all my surroundings are just like that.

“ Yesterday, you, my teacher, busy man as you are, came all the way to my poor sick-room to see me. I cannot thank you enough. I have been ill for over a year now, and at times have felt my loneliness intensely. But even in this desolate sick-room I now feel the presence of God, and amid all my loneliness am conscious of His strength.

“ How many are the days up till now that I have spent in this solitary state. But yesterday you, my teacher, called, and oh ! I simply cannot say how much strength you have brought me. Please save one wandering sheep who is lost in the desert of human existence and lead me through to the light of God.”

The above letters, on the whole, have been written

by seekers, though several subsequently found. What about those who have entered into the Christian experience, what have they to say? Here is a letter from a young man living in the country whom later I was able to meet:

“ You ask how it is that I came to enter into faith; it is as follows. For about five years I was worrying more and more about the seeming lack of meaning in human existence. I felt intensely the utter loneliness of life, yet I had no idea as to how to get rid of the feeling. On the top of it all I lost my mother. I felt more and more, as I saw the rich get richer and the poor poorer, that the only thing to do was to resign myself to circumstances (a common Buddhist attitude).

“ It was just when I felt like that that I saw your advertisement in the paper, and though I was somewhat suspicious about it, yet I decided to join the New Life Society. I found myself as a result in a world of whose existence I had never known before. I discovered in God’s love that for which I had been seeking. Christianity got rid of all my worry and showed me that without the love of God neither the redemption of society nor the salvation of man can be accomplished. I realized that my own salvation was a call to serve others. I simply had to speak about the love of Christ whenever I got the chance. I decided to be baptized, and last September, with two of my friends, I received the rite.

“ I happen to live in a very strong Buddhist

centre—the headquarters of three Buddhist sects—and it is over six miles to church. Further, I am working in a factory, and so can only get to morning service once a month. Usually when the work is over (on Sunday evenings) we start off at about six o'clock and do not get back until half-past eleven. This makes it rather difficult to persuade people to go with us.

“After joining the New Life Society I started to take the Bible Study Course, and a group of us now meet together during the lunch-hour and read the Bible together. When we get back in the evening we make our preparation for next day. I have to get up at five in the morning for my quiet time as work begins at six.

“Through your kindness I have been able to get forty people to go to church, and in addition I have distributed a good number of Christian books and papers—I take about twenty-five a week, but cannot afford more—and find more joy in distributing them than in reading them myself. Just before Christmas three more were baptized, and three more hope to be shortly.”

The writer of this letter was fortunate in having a church only six miles away. Another correspondent who had been taught by the Correspondence Course had to make a fifty-mile journey for his baptism, after which he wrote to the pastor :

“Thank you so much for yesterday. I don't know quite how to put it, but somehow I feel different from ever before. I am happier than I

can tell. My heart is very full. The solemnity of the church services, so utterly different from Shinto services, the atmosphere of joy and love, the reverent way in which the women came in and knelt quietly in prayer—in shrines and temples such an atmosphere is unknown. The kindness of the hearts of the brothers and sisters in church echoed in mine. It was a sort of warm atmosphere, just like getting under a *kotatsu* (a padded quilt covering a charcoal fire).

The sign of the cross I received is a message of joy; Whatever be my suffering or sorrow I will endure; For there is great joy in it."

The final letter is of interest as showing something of a man's inner experience on becoming a Christian :

"When my soul was merged in the great capital purpose of the universe, namely the will of the Father-God, that which before had been so exhausted and dried up and trodden down began to pulse with fresh life. How long can one man's self-will and self-desire resist the power of evolution in the universe, the will of God? Embraced by that law, no, not by a law, but by the love of the Father-God, I was able to find my real status in the relationship between God and man, and as a result I felt new power in myself. I had a tendency to be lazy and was prone to fall into despair, but now I have given it all up, that self-centred life which betrayed me, and instead am dipping into the happiness of

being in the embrace of God, and I feel a new spirit of endeavour springing up within myself.

“If it is His will, I can now meet my trials with a smile. I have lost all sense of flurry now that I know His real purpose. I feel His strong power springing up within me which enables me to overcome death and suffering and selfishness and sin and go on. Even in my dreams I experience inspiration from above. I find myself holding my hands towards the sky and saying: ‘I am a strong man from to-day. I will speak all to-day and do my best, and after the rest of the night to-morrow I will stand again with new life, if God will use me.’ I have only to do all things in the place that I am put. I can praise God with a loud voice not for ‘the victory of death’¹ but because of ‘the victory of God.’ O Death, where is thy sting? A strong faith is burning within me like a fire and I find myself overwhelmed with thanksgiving for His grace. Oh, the joy of this daily life of endeavour amidst His love and grace!

“I believe very strongly in the immanence of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, God’s wisdom and God’s love. I never dreamed that the little introduction to the Gospel which I saw in the newspaper would lift me up to such a world of salvation.”

¹ The name of a famous novel. The idea is that however strong may be the pressure on a man to do something which he does not want, by dying he can escape it and so win the victory over those who would compel him.

CHAPTER VII

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ONE inevitable result of the Newspaper Work is that the staff gets inundated with questions. This is due in part to the fact that, according to Japanese custom, the *sensei* or teacher is accorded a place of special honour, and his advice sought with respect. In the eyes of the members we have attained to that rank, and so our counsel is sought on all manner of things. Another reason is that the religious advisers of the people hitherto are ceasing to hold the confidence of their flock. This is due in part to the fact that the standard of morals and education of the average Buddhist priest is low, often lower than those to whom he ministers. Again, time after time we have had letters from correspondents, to whom we have suggested that a personal talk with the local pastor might mean the solution of their troubles, in which they have said that they cannot afford to pay for such advice. The thought that it might be given free, as a labour of love, has not crossed their minds. In fairness to the Buddhist priesthood, however, it is only right to point out that the custom of giving a gift in return for help is almost universal throughout Japan. Nevertheless, the fact remains that a very large number of

priests regard the priesthood more as a profession than a vocation. Yet a third reason is that the writer has no person in whom he can confide, and in consequence he writes to a person far away who will not betray his confidence. We have found that we can get more rapidly to close quarters with a person by means of a letter than by an interview. But whatever the reason, the fact remains that the New Life Hall is father-confessor to hundreds of folk.

The questions are infinite in variety, from simple domestic problems to questions of abstract metaphysics. Most of them are questions common the world over, but there are a certain number peculiar to Japan. At the end of this chapter some examples will be given of such questions.

Questions of wider interest than the individual concerned are answered in *New Life*. We believe that these two pages are the most popular in the magazine. The responsibility for answering them rests with Mr. Matsubara, who finds his experience as a school-teacher of the utmost value.

Most of the questions seem to be quite genuine, actual problems and situations confronting the writer. We have only known one case of a correspondent who manufactured questions. He did so in order to get a free copy of the magazine every month. We discouraged him.

Some of the questions deal with marriage problems and are extremely difficult to answer. In this department of Japanese life Christian ideals do not prevail. Marriage is primarily a matter concerning the family, only a secondary thing so far

as the individuals most vitally affected are concerned. Again, "face," as in all oriental countries, is a factor to take into account. The innate courtesy of the people is not always helpful to a spirit of strict truth. All these things affect the nature of the answers which are given, and often lead to round about methods where in the West a direct answer would seem obvious.

For example, what sort of advice should be given to the woman who wrote the following letter?

" . . . My two sons, aged ten and twelve, are living with me in the private hospital where I work. The younger one is the cause of all my worry. He has got into the habit of robbing the till every day and of buying cake with the proceeds. I had noticed for some time that money was missing, and though I had my suspicions it was only a day or two ago that I caught him in the act. When I discovered it, I was so upset and angry that I could neither speak nor weep.

"What, teacher, do you think I should do? My master knows nothing about the missing money, as I have repaid it out of my own pocket. If I tell him, he will tell me that I am to blame since it is my child who is at fault, and so I should be worse off than ever. I know I am to blame in part, but I cannot be always at the dispensary door, and it is when I am not there that the money goes.

"I have an aunt who says that I had better leave. Teacher, what do you think I should

do? Should I give notice or should I just wait until there is an opportunity to go naturally? ”

“ Spank Mr. ‘ Ten-year-old,’ ” says the Westerner. But in Japan such things are not done, and besides, he is a boy and so is not under the same obligation to obey his mother as his Western cousin. The confession to the employer would mean a loss of “ face,” and that in turn would mean that the mother would have to go. Probably the best way would be to try and work through his school-teacher.

With this much by way of introduction let us go on to examine some of the questions dealt with in the columns of *New Life*.

1. *I think that Christianity is incompatible with patriotism because it is a religion which teaches the love of all mankind. Is this so?*

I am puzzled that the Japanese people, who are accustomed to the idea that there is no contradiction between the love of country and the love of family, should think that there must be one between the love of country and the love of mankind. The Japanese know well what it is to make sacrifices on behalf of the family, and also what it is to sacrifice the family for the good of the country. We have been taught so and have believed it. It would seem, therefore, that the logical conclusion is that there may be times when the country's welfare must be sacrificed for that of the world. This idea should be the only reason why Japan should have a position in the family of nations.

From ancient times true patriots are not those

who have served their country because it is convenient for them, but who have lost themselves for their country's good. Consequently, by their sacrifice the country has been made strong, and they themselves have come to be considered as necessary to its welfare. By a similar sacrifice we must make Japan necessary to the world.

When General Nogi was President of the Peers' School, he invited Dr. Nitobé to speak to his pupils there. The doctor, in his usual way, proclaimed the idea of international love, and when he had finished the General said: "I must thank you, doctor, for the way in which you have presented to the boys that thing which I have always had in mind but have not been able to express so well. The spirit of your speech to-day has not yet got deep root in our youth. Our young military attachés abroad still treat the countries to which they are sent as potential enemies. This spirit colours their daily deeds, and I am much concerned about it."

The Emperor Meiji said in one of his poems:

Whereas I deem this age
Wherein the world in brotherhood is bound;
Whence is it that the fierce winds rage,
And dash and spread wild waves around?

If you go deeply into the spirit of this poem you may find the truth for which you are seeking.

2. An old mother, because of extreme poverty and under the belief that her death might bring relief to her family, committed suicide. Must we condemn the action of this old woman because we stand for Christian ideals?

If, for that reason, anybody were to condemn the old mother, then we can confidently say that he is not a Christian. In face of realities of this kind and the prospect of a miserable death, to be bothered about abstract questions of sin and guilt would suggest that the questioner does not appreciate the reality of human life and human society, and is indeed not quite normal.

Sin is a thing which has to do with the living and not the dead. It is an accepted thing, according to Christian truth, that suicide is a sin, but it does not, therefore, follow that we should forgo suicide for fear of missing salvation and eternal life. A life that has been saved by God has no need to commit suicide, whatever may be the circumstances with which it is surrounded, and whatever may be the sufferings which it has to face. It is better for humanity that it should live. Christianity is a religion which attaches such value to the individual that it required a great Death to prove it.

3. There has been continual illness and misfortune in my family, so we recently consulted a fortune-teller. His verdict is that a tree in our garden has been planted in bad direction. I had all but decided to follow his advice and transplant the tree, when the thought came to me: Should I, as a Christian, allow myself to be worried by such a thing? What shall I do?¹

¹ Fortune-tellers do a thriving trade in Japan. They are consulted on all manner of occasions, especially with regard to lucky dates for marriages, etc. The Tokyo City tram tickets bear a weekly advertisement of one such, who professes to eschew superstition and follow properly approved scientific methods.

My advice to you is to transplant that tree as soon as possible. Also, inasmuch as you say that you have faith in Christianity, you would do well to realize that it does not amount to very much. I say this, not in any way because I look down on you for your attitude, but because it is best for us to be honest with ourselves. It is no good trying to keep up a standard of faith and all the time be worried because of the fear of fate.

If, however, you want to get rid of the cause of your illness, I think it would be foolish to concentrate your whole attention on one tree. It is more important that you should consider the structure of your house, and whether it requires alterations from the standpoint of light, air, etc. Regard the tree from that standpoint. It is a sign of shallow thinking to be worried about some superstitious question of direction and so forth. Of course it is also a sign of shallow thinking to believe that illness and misfortune are caused by a single thing like the position of a tree.

4. *A Nichiren (Buddhist) believer attacked me, saying that I had disinherited my father's religion. My father belongs to the Tendai sect. By believing in Christianity myself, am I really shaming my father's name and damaging the good repute of my ancestors?*

Many people when they meet with an attack of this kind are apt to say that there is perhaps something in it after all. Let us assume that by changing your religion and believing in Christianity you have spoilt the good name of your ancestors. Go back

in your family from your father to your grandfather, from your grandfather to your great-grandfather, and so on until you come to the first one who believed in the Tendai faith. You cannot go back further than Dengyo Daishi, because Dengyo Daishi founded the Tendai sect. Then the first member of your family who believed in the Tendai sect must have disinherited his father's religion and spoilt the good name of his father.

But that is not all. All the Buddhists of this country must have spoilt their father's names, for Buddhism only came into Japan in the seventh century, and is not the religion of Japan.

Such a question, in short, only arises because of the feelings of the person who asks with regard to the religion which he happens to believe. If it were a question of tarnishing a father's name, the Constitution would never have allowed freedom of religious belief.

But if you, by believing in Christianity, were to do immoral things, and were to do evil to other people, and were to act as a disturbing influence in society, and if you were to do all this because of your religion, then I think it might be said that you were dishonouring your father's name, and disgracing your ancestors. The most important question is how you think of and receive Christ, and how you believe in your faith, and how strong convictions you hold.

5. I have recently started to go to church, and it is my desire to be baptized. But my father is a strong believer in Nichiren, and he says that I should

not go to church or become a Christian, and his opposition is very strong. If I do not obey my father I become a disobedient son, and yet I want very much indeed to become a Christian. Shall I give up my church-going because of filial duty, or shall I become a Christian and be guilty of a breach of filial piety?

Your parents do not oppose you becoming a Christian because Christianity is a bad religion, but because they think it is a bad religion. The best way of correcting that idea is for them to see that in everything you put them first. If your belief in Christianity is only a matter of form, and your character does not improve, then when your parents, as believers in Nichiren, accuse you of a breach of filial piety you haven't much excuse.

The Bible tells us to "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance." You must, by your obedience to your parents and your thoughtfulness for them, so impress them that they will be compelled to say: "I don't like Christianity, but I am deeply impressed by my son's conduct."

When you ask: Should I become a Christian even if it means a breach of filial piety? you give me the impression that you have not got a full understanding either of Christianity or of filial piety. For you make the mistake of thinking that to do what your father wishes is in itself an act of filial piety. If your father has a mistaken idea, it is your duty, your filial duty, to correct it. Indeed, Christianity nowhere teaches that we should be guilty of a breach of filial piety; indeed it teaches that love between parents and child is an essential of the

religion. It goes further, it regards the whole world as a brotherhood. Not only our parents but all people should be the object of our kindness.

6. *When I go to church in the east I hear certain criticisms of that in the west, and if I go to the church in the south I am told that the one in the north is wrong. This has thrown my ideas into confusion. Isn't there a real Christian Church? I want to put my belief in it. Or is it a matter of indifference as to what Church I belong to, if I really believe in the Church as such?*

You must be careful not to confuse denominational belief with belief in Christ. My advice to you is not to make a pilgrimage from one church to another, but to be more honest with your own faith. Suppose you hear criticisms of the west church by the east; it is not necessary for you to go to the west church to find out whether they are justified or not. Attacks as a rule are not on essential matters. The impression that I get from your question is that you have been the round of the churches and have just paid attention to those superficial matters instead of the essentials of Christianity. The Christian Church is a place to seek God, not an exhibition ground of religion; so people who go to church need to have a prayerful mind. Read the Bible with such a mind and find Jesus Christ as He is. This is the essential thing, instead of wasting your time on side-shows, which are sources of confusion.

But now that you have heard all these attacks, I suppose you can't help being puzzled. My

advice is that you think clearly over the points of attack and form your own judgments. When a man attacks another he is exposing his real feelings; you need to judge, therefore, whether his attack springs from conviction or from some ulterior motive. It should not be difficult to decide to which category the attack belongs, if you think things over. When, however, the impress of Jesus Christ on your heart gets deeper, the influence of these attacks will drop from you like the leaves of autumn. Your faith will get deeper, and these questions will automatically dissolve themselves. You cannot judge unless you grow to the standard of those whom you judge, so although I sympathize with you in your troubled state, yet I must say that the best way of escaping from these difficulties is to get your own faith stronger, and to have a deeper understanding of Christianity. There is no other way.

CHAPTER VIII

CONNEXION CARDS

THERE is one trait in their character which the Japanese have made peculiarly their own; it is curiosity. To ask where you are going, why you are going, and when you are going, are matters of everyday conversation; your nationality is always a matter of interest, your profession more so, and even your age is not safe. The local police station has complete records of your past, even though you may happen to be a model member of society. I well remember, shortly after coming to Japan, being overtaken by a breathless policeman who had chased me a mile from my house. He was anxious to know my wife's mother's maiden name. *Questionnaire* is reputed to be a French word; it has been naturalized in Japan.

Let me hasten, however, to add that the lot of the average foreigner in Japan is much more free than that of the "alien" in England. If he treats the police with courtesy, he can be sure of sympathy. Further, questions are not asked in a spirit of mere curiosity, but as a sign of genuine interest in your welfare.

I had always been shy about applying this

method to the Newspaper Work, until an American missionary convinced me of its value. We therefore drew up a form for inquirers who joined the New Life Society. The Japanese are quite accustomed to such things. A *rirekisho* (*curriculum vitæ*) is produced on all occasions, and contains a complete record of a man's career from his schooldays. The fact that we have received over seven hundred and fifty such forms in the interval shows that no serious harm has been done; indeed their value has been incalculable in enabling us to get an idea of the person with whom we are corresponding.

The form is quite a modest affair. It bears in Japanese the title, "Connexion Card." A letter of explanation accompanies it. The card contains the following questions:

1. Present address?
2. Permanent address?
3. Age?
4. Profession?
5. Name?
6. Educational record?
7. Have you any relatives or friends who are Christians?
8. Have you any Church connexion? Have you been baptized?
9. Have you made any special study hitherto of Christianity? If so, of what character?
10. Have you any special matter on which you want guidance?
11. What is your purpose in joining the New Life Society?

We will now look at the Connexion Cards of eight members taken at random, all of whom went on to baptism. These forms were filled in before the writer had any idea of becoming a Christian. In deference to the writers, the names have been slightly altered.

1. HAMADA SHOSHIN. Age 16. Student and farmer. Fourth year in secondary school. Living in the country, two or three miles away from the nearest church. No Christian relatives or friends or Church connexion. "As I am preparing for an entrance examination to the Higher School, I have not been able to give much time to thinking about God, or to studying the Bible; or is it because my faith is so weak? Also, I am not quite sure that God approves of my desire to get rich. My reason for joining is that I read one or two Christian books which I rather liked, and they decided me to join."

2. KATO KUNISAKU. Aged 19. Farmer. Higher elementary school. Living in the country 150 miles north of Tokyo and two miles from the nearest church. "I have, of course, no Christian relatives, but I have some Christian friends; indeed I have been two or three times to church, but I have not been baptized. Instead I am full of doubts. . . . I cannot say that I have made any special study of Christianity; all that I have is a little knowledge that I acquired in my elementary schooldays. . . . I am having a hard battle with impure thoughts. It is a continual struggle, and all I can see is the gradual destruction of that truth and goodness and beauty which lie at the basis of man's life. I am coming to despair in human society. Yet at the same time

I long to get away from this attitude and become the owner of a pure heart. It is for this reason that I joined the New Life Society. But there is an even more urgent reason. I am ill and I want to get away from that feeling of despair and hatred for my fellow-man which fills my life, and instead to enter into a noble existence. Such a life, I believe, would be one of power, and would be a guide to my whole life. But how can I find it? It is because of all these doubts that my mind is tired. Can I get victory over them? "

3. KASHIBARA KOMAKO. Aged 21. Domestic servant. Higher elementary school. Living in Tokyo. "Of course I have no Christian relatives or friends. . . . I have not studied Christianity hitherto to any extent. . . . I simply do not understand anything of the books which I borrow, nor do I read them with any zest. I know that it is wrong to lead a life without any special aim, but as one of a big staff, and a very ordinary one at that, I cannot get hold of anything which gives me assurance. I feel ashamed to say this, but I will be grateful for your help. . . . I have been wanting to know about Christianity for a long time, so when I saw your article in the paper I applied at once. I am glad indeed at having such an opportunity."

4. MATSUNAKA SUSUMU. Aged 40. Mining engineer. Graduate of the Imperial University. Living in a mining town in Hokkaido. Has Christian relatives and friends. (He first of all enrolled in one of our Bible Study Courses, and only later joined the New Life Society, so this record was sent in when he was well on the way to faith.)

“Have read *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Four Gospels at a Glance*, and also the New Life Society's *Bible Life of Christ*. . . . Feel that just as men need new life, so Christianity needs new methods of propagation; that such a fine religion should make such slow progress is due to the inferiority of the methods used. I want to discover new methods to attain that end.” A letter which came in later, perhaps was the most revealing thing about this correspondent. It ran:

“Thank you very much for your inquiries about my connexion with the local church. Soon after I got into touch with the New Life Hall I started to go to it, and after a short time was urged to become a Christian. I also wished to do so, so I was baptized, and subsequently I was confirmed by the Bishop of Hokkaido. . . .

“I used to think that all religions led up to the same summit and the paths up alone differed. But I now realize that this idea is mistaken. It was only after I had entered for the first time into the way of Christ that my hopes were realized, and I felt that I had risen into new life, and that I was filled with peace and joy.

“This is what I feel, but I am only a first-year student, so please continue to lead me.”

5. MORIMOTO HAJIME. Aged 20. No profession. Elementary school. Nearest church eight miles across country. Has been confined to bed for six years with spine trouble, since just after leaving the elementary school. Has two cousins who have

been to a Christian girls' school, but no relatives or friends who are Christians. Has not studied Christianity at all hitherto. Anxious to learn how man's short life can be lived well. Would also like to know what should be done to make art and poetry more worthy. Worried over his long illness. He happened to read a novel by Kurata¹ called *The Start of Love and Recognition*, and through it got a new idea of the greatness of the love of God, and thereby realized his own mistaken ideas. Joined the New Life Society in order to find out the way of truth.

6. AMANO NOBUYUKI. Aged 21. Shop-hand. Secondary education. Living in Tokyo. Has a stepsister who is a Christian. Had no previous knowledge of Christianity. Started on his own to go to church, but without any understanding of the meaning of religion. Some time after he saw the newspaper articles, and joined the New Life Society on the advice of the pastor, in order to study further. Has now read several books: *Confessions of St. Augustine*, *Lives of Christ*, a novel by Kagawa, and a volume on Church doctrine.

7. NAKANISHI MINORU. Aged 23. Higher elementary school. A tailor. Five miles from a city in Hokkaido. Personal record sent after he had been a member for nearly two years, during which time he had been a prolific reader. Head of the local Young Men's Society. Has no Christian friends or relatives. Meets with a good deal of opposition in his home, and even his wife

¹ One of Japan's leading novelists; not a Christian but strongly influenced by Christianity.

does not agree with his faith. Has read the Bible but not understood it, and also some books about Christianity and Science. Puzzled over the problem of the idle rich—"What has God to say about them?" Also wonders whether Christianity and Science are reconcilable. Heard of Christianity first through the Salvation Army, when in Tokyo, which greatly impressed him. Encouraged him to read some Christian books. Then started to read the articles in the papers and decided to apply, and later joined in order to get a better hold of the meaning of faith.

8. NOMA MASAO. Aged 41. An elementary school-teacher. Secured Teacher's Training Certificate by home training. Has two friends, whom he knows, who are Christians. Has been ill for three years, and feels that he will not recover. Suffering intensely, both while in hospital and also at home. Lost his only child at age of five four months after going down himself. Has tasted the depths both spiritually and materially. His mother looking after him while his wife goes out to work to keep the home together. Living in present house through the kindness of a friend. "Sometimes my old pupils come to see me and try to cheer me up." Conscious of happiness in love of mother and wife; wishes, therefore, to get well as soon as possible in order to repay their kindness. Illness was worse of late on account of the rainy season and felt that the end could not be far off, and resigned himself to fate. But things have just started to take a turn for the better, with the result that he feels that he must, at all costs, enter

into faith, and be restored by spiritual means. Has read a book by General Yamamuro of the Salvation Army called *Comfort in the Sick-Room*, which made him wish all the more to be saved through Christ, and for that reason has joined the New Life Society.

These men and women, and in the case of the last, the wife also, have been baptized. The above outlines give some idea of their spiritual condition when they first applied. They may well be described as typical. The two special points to notice is that nearly all of them are young, and secondly, the number of motives for joining are nearly as many as the number of examples. But they all have this in common, they are the result of some form of *hammon*, in every case dispelled by the Gospel. *Hammon* is one of the most common features of the spiritual mentality of Japan to-day. The word is hard to translate, but it represents a sort of spiritual worry and lack of satisfaction through the lack of a solution of the problem of life. It particularly affects the younger generation, and is one of the reasons for the high percentage of suicides in Japan. The Christian solution of *hammon* is a thing which needs careful thought, for it may prove to be one of the most vital contributions that Christianity can make to Japan at the present time.

CHAPTER IX

SOME FIGURES AND STATISTICS

IN a work such as Newspaper Evangelism, which is touching people by the thousand, a study of the lessons which these figures reveal provides from one standpoint an analysis of Japan's spiritual condition.

The total number of applications received by the Seikokai New Life Hall and its two "children" is well over 50,000. To every applicant suitable Christian literature has been sent, and as this literature is shared with the members of the family, it is probably no exaggeration to say that over a quarter of a million have been reached by this means.

While numbers vary from week to week, despite the inevitable growing familiarity of the public with the articles, the number of applications per week shows no substantial falling off, as the following figures show:

Year	<i>Average Response per Insertion</i>	
	<i>Tokyo Nichinichi</i>	<i>The Housewife's Friend</i>
1925	131	0
1928	115	0
1930	128	92
1931	123	161
1932	113 ¹	150

The total number in a week in which an advertisement has appeared in the *Tokyo Nichinichi* has never fallen below 100 in recent years. The

¹ Introduction of 10 sen fee per applicant.

greatest number received in a week, apart from that memorable occasion at the time of the Sunday School Convention, has been 549. During 1931 the average per week was just on 200.

This huge number come from all over the Far East, from Kamchatka in the north to the Marshall and Caroline Islands in the south. They have come from every prefecture in Japan; indeed, in a single week applications were received from every prefecture as well as from Korea, Formosa, and the High Seas.

An analysis of the 10,400 applications received in 1931 revealed the fact that of the total number just on 3,000 came from Tokyo and suburbs, while the northern island of Hokkaido, whose inhabitants have, to a large extent, left behind them

The ashes of their fathers
And the temples of their gods,

is responsible for 552. About 20 per cent. of the total are women, a proportion which is double what it was a few years back. This is due in part to the use of a woman's magazine, though even it produces more men than women! Of the total applying through the *Tokyo Nichinichi*, 13 per cent. are women.

A careful study of the applications received during two separate weeks at a wide interval shows that of 300 applicants, 83 live in Tokyo and suburbs, 96 more live in cities or towns where there are churches, while 121 live in places where there are no churches.

In the single prefecture of Chiba, near Tokyo, of the 348 cities, towns, and villages, applications

have come in from 328. The Christian Church at present has occupied 33.

Of the 50,000 who have applied, nearly 4,000 or 8 per cent. have taken the further step of joining the New Life Society. Of this number it would be safe to say that at least 30 per cent. are nowhere near a church.

When we come to examine the Library statistics, we find that since the resurrection of the work after the earthquake, no less than 18,310 volumes have been lent out. About 90 per cent of this total have gone to non-Christian homes. People often speak about Japanese dishonesty. Remembering that these books go to people whom we know only by correspondence, who are scattered all over the Japanese Empire, who have themselves to pay the postage back, and also that there is always the risk of a package being lost in the post, for which it is not fair to hold members responsible, the fact that we have lost less than 100 volumes in eight years is a striking testimony to the honesty of the common people. Could any circulating library in England show such a record?

Of this total of 18,000 volumes, women members have borrowed 2,432 volumes, or about 13 per cent. The average number of books borrowed per man member is ten volumes, per woman member ten volumes also.

Books of a devotional character are the most popular, representing 37 per cent. of the total. Fiction comes next with 15 per cent. Despite the value of the special section on rural problems, only 46 volumes have been borrowed from it, a fact

which would suggest that members are out primarily for books of a religious character.

The most popular author is Kagawa. No fewer than 2,466 volumes, or nearly one-seventh of the total lent, have been from his pen. His trilogy *Before the Dawn* has been responsible for 981 of the above total, a fact which would suggest the big field awaiting the Christian novelist.

Three of the most popular books in the Library have been *Les Miserables*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *Pollyanna*, while the most popular after the works by Kagawa has been *The Pilgrim's Progress*, no fewer than 379 volumes of which have been lent out. After Kagawa the next most popular authors are General Yamamuro of the Salvation Army, with over 1,000 books to his credit, and Uchimura, the free lance Bible expositor, of whose works 718 volumes have been borrowed. Books specially addressed to those who are ill, or who are anxious to get certainty in their faith, are always popular. Over 1,300 volumes have been lent out on the life and teaching of Christ. Papini's *Life of Christ* has been the most popular; can it be because of the socialistic undercurrent which flows through it?¹

About 1,000 people have enrolled in the two-year Bible Study Course known as *The Hundred-Week One-Inch Lecture Bible*. It is simply written by a successful pastor. About 250 have enrolled in the shorter course on the Four Gospels. In both cases this has meant systematic daily Bible study, as the courses are sent out in monthly sections. During

¹ For fuller details concerning the Library see Appendix II, p. 156 f.

this period the Tokyo office has sold nearly £130 worth of Bibles, Testaments or Gospels.

The most interesting statistics are from the Connexion Cards, however. We will consider them in the mass, basing our figures on the 750 forms received when the analysis was made.

Of this total, 108 are engaged in commerce of some kind, 91 are salaried men, and 81 are labourers. Nine are in the services, 58 are students, 153—a large and suggestive proportion—are ill, 129 are engaged in rural tasks of some kind or other, 36 fall under such heads as merchant sailors, nurses, etc., while the remainder do not state what they are. Of the salaried men, 18 are Government officials and 16 are teachers. It will be seen from the above that the newspaper message is fairly catholic in its appeal. The large percentage of sufferers would suggest that they can find little comfort in the native religions.

A study of the ages of the applicants is illuminating, especially in the light of what might be said to be the interest in religion of the younger generation in England and America.

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of Applicants</i>
13-16	5
17-20	131
21-25	338
26-30	156
31-35	49
Above 35	71

This means that the overwhelming number of applicants belong to the younger generation. This is no cause for surprise, for they are feeling the

effect of a secular education and an unsatisfactory economic and social order.

This is seen from another standpoint by an analysis of the education of these 750. Of this number

- 25 are of university education;
- 34 are of college education;
- 317 are of secondary education;
- 365 have only had a primary education, and
- 9 are not clear.

These figures would suggest that the present state of religious unrest affects all degrees of education alike.

When we study the reasons given for joining the New Life Society the following results appear :

<i>Causes</i>	<i>Number</i>
Spiritual aspiration	258
Desire to study Christianity	113
For deepening of Christian experience	72
For general spiritual culture	66
A sense of need of strength to help society	61
Comfort during misfortune	59
On the advice of Christian friends	54
Regret and repentance	45
The loss of loved ones	22

The large percentage of those who have joined as a result of a desire for spiritual help is significant.

A further study of what they hope to get as a result of their membership is even more interesting.

<i>Hope</i>	<i>Number</i>
Assurance in religious faith	322
A clear understanding of Christianity	94
Peace of mind	63
Discovery of the purpose of human life	58
Comparison with other religions	38
Solution of domestic problems	36

Solution of the problem of evil . . .	24
Guidance with regard to occupation . . .	23
Help in marriage or sex problems . . .	20
Understanding of relation between science and religion . . .	11
Understanding of relation between nation- ality and religion . . .	11
Help in facing persecution . . .	8
Miscellaneous . . .	32

The fact that nearly half say that they want to find a sure faith is impressive evidence of the chaotic condition of religious life in Japan at the present time.

Another interesting sidelight which a study of the cards gives is that 458 have no Christian relations, and 365, or nearly half, not even Christian friends. About one-third say that they have no knowledge of Christianity whatever, not even from books. About one-sixth say that they possess Bibles, a striking testimony to the far-reaching work of the Bible societies, but it is very common for them to add that they do not understand them. Of other books specifically named as giving the member knowledge of Christianity, those by Kagawa outnumber those by all other Christian writers put together.

Finally we come to the question of baptism. Here it is extraordinarily difficult to give any conclusive report. The literature stresses church attendance, and only suggests membership of the New Life Society when this is not possible. We get information from time to time as to what this means. One day a young man walked into the New Life Hall. Some years before, while working as a herdsman, he had seen the article in the paper, had applied and received our literature, and as a result had, on his

own initiative, gone to church. There he was baptized. Hearing the call to the ministry, he then decided to put by a little each month from his meagre wage in order to put himself through the Theological College, and when he came to see us he was in the middle of the course. But we had no record of him other than that of his application, and had it not been for a chance visit we should never have heard his spiritual history. Mr. Murao on one occasion was visiting a church in north Japan, and the pastor remarked that four out of the five of his keenest workers were men first reached through the Newspaper Work. We had record of only one! Even when a person joins the New Life Society our one aim is to get him linked on to the local church, and once such a link is made, our link with him ceases on the expiration of his membership fee. Literally hundreds of introductions have been made at the request of the party concerned to the local church. After this the responsibility for their spiritual progress depends on the pastor concerned.

Nevertheless, we have heard of over two hundred baptisms, but for the reasons given above this figure must be regarded as a minimum.

This chapter has been one of statistics. If they are regarded only as numbers they are dull things. But invest the figures with human personality and they come to have a new meaning. We see in them not men in the mass, but individuals linked together in a common quest or a common loyalty. Apply them to the Newspaper Work and we see in them men and women who fain would find, and those who, by the grace of God, have found already.

CHAPTER X

THREE OR FOUR STORIES

I. THE MARK ON THE CEILING

IN a peasant's home in north Japan a young man lay dying. He had been employed in a city office, and at the time of the great earthquake in Tokyo, had been put in charge of the tent at the station, pitched to house the refugees. He had caught a cold and the pressure of his work prevented him from caring for it till it had touched his lungs, and now there was only the end to wait for.

His folk, half in kindness, half in fear, had built a little shed in the garden for him. And so the long, dreary days passed by, while the illness strengthened its grip on his wasting body.

Then one day his eyes caught sight of the mark of a cross in the newspaper. He read the words that followed and wrote to the New Life Hall for the information offered. The link with the Library opened up to him a new world, for he was intensely fond of reading.

I had occasion to pass through his parts so I

took the opportunity of stopping to see him. It was a glorious day in the early summer; the trees were bursting forth into green, while the last vestiges of the winter snow on the mountains behind were disappearing. The pastor and I made our way across the drill ground to the west of the city, and after passing a few farm-houses came to a small hamlet with a brook burbling alongside the narrow road, and a clump of trees casting their long, morning shadows over the thatched roofs beneath. It was a typical country home with low, smoked rafters, and the farm implements scattered around, while in the corner could be seen the now rapidly diminishing bundles of rice. The old mother bade us welcome, though not without a shade of suspicion. After a cup of tea she led us out to the shed in the garden. It was a rude affair, made of beams and planks roughly knocked together and barely six feet high. There lay the sufferer on a bed indescribably dirty, a picture of utter despair. As we sat and talked of a God who loved him, my eye happened to catch sight of a little piece of paper pasted on the ceiling above his bed. It was black with a white diamond in the centre. I asked what it meant. "Oh, that mark! When the pain gets extra bad I just look at it and try to think of it only, and it helps me to forget the pain." It was a Buddhist idea, but what a gospel!

I sent him afterwards a picture of our Lord, while a friend in England sent him a luminous cross.

The lady missionary in the town visited him and taught him, and bit by bit the light of God broke

in. He was baptized a year later. And then he began to do what others in good health are wont to forget. He started to minister from his sick-bed. He got into touch with a young man, a sufferer like himself, and by means of letters brought so gracious an influence to bear on his life that his mother, in gratitude, made the long journey of two hundred miles from Tokyo to meet her son's benefactor. The next person he led was his own sister, who had nursed him through his illness, and now the home is the brighter for the faith of the two.

He is still an invalid, but the cold comfort of the mark on the ceiling has long given place to the warmth of the Master's presence. Listen to his meditation at the close of the day:

"The sun is sinking in the west. The fields are brilliant with the autumn colours, and Mount Higashi stands calm above, enshrouded in the evening mists. The sparrows in the garden raise their noisy voices in praise and gratitude to God for His goodness.

"On this peaceful evening I pause to reflect upon the blessings of this day: fine weather, a letter from a friend in a distant land, daily bread, and a life full of peace. For all these blessings I lift my heart in thanksgiving to our blessed Lord. This day upon my bed of sickness I can count the many tokens of His goodness.

"But my joy is mingled with sorrow, for I remember my sins, my estrangement from God, my weakness, and the poverty of my love to the Father above. We are always troubled by regret and sorrow and irritation; but our Lord shows us

His cross and gives us peace of mind and eternal life. Our Lord is always with us, and He will give us quiet and rest, and guide our steps into the morrow."

God rest you and bless you, Kato, my friend.

2. THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE OF IMAIZUMI

In north-west Japan lies the modern prefecture of Niigata. Modern it only is in name, for though the railway has now brought it to within a few hours of Tokyo, yet the range of mountains, impassable in winter, which cuts it off from the east, has shaped the outlook of the people, the great bulk of whom remain conservative both in politics and religion.

Their religion is Shinshu-Buddhism, one of the warmer sects with a gospel of a saviour, embodying, as its teachers say, all the good points of Christianity, but less outspoken in its moral demands. With such a message there is no need for an alien faith.

Yet strange to say, the press has shown a friendly attitude, and the Rev. H. G. Watts of the Canadian Church Mission, who is in charge of the Niigata New Life Hall, has been able to make full use of their columns. Indeed, the papers have competed with one another to get hold of the Christian articles, two of them actually paying for the matter they insert.

A year or two ago three men from one town applied independently for more information about the Christian faith, of which they had read in the papers. All were young and all were natural leaders. One of

them was a maker of Japanese socks, those socks with the divided toe which seem so unbecoming until one gets accustomed to them; another was an official in the local town office, while the third was what is known as a *benshi*, a profession peculiar to Japan. His duty is to be a sort of human "talkie," explaining the moving pictures at the local cinema, and illuminating them with jokes and local touches. He had, on one occasion, been called upon to explain a picture of the Christ, and it had made a profound impression on him. But ultimately difficulties in his own home, and a sense of dissatisfaction with society in general, led him to ask for more information about Christianity. The wife of the official lay sick and her husband, anxious about her recovery, made the journey to Niigata, and there for himself heard the story of Jesus Christ.

In process of time all three were baptized and confirmed, and decided they must do something for their town. This was no easy task, for it was the boast of Higashi-Sanjo that it had never yet allowed the alien faith a footing. Nevertheless, they decided to engage the public library for a Christian meeting. The Bishop and a Japanese layman came down for the meeting: it was successful beyond their highest hopes. Over one hundred and fifty were present, and listened carefully to all that the preachers had to say. It was decided to follow up the meeting with yet another, even more successful. The town was moved by the very religion it affected to despise.

Among those who had attended the meeting was an old man, a retired railway official, and also

a retired Christian. He was so enthused by the faith of the three that he openly allied himself with them and promised fifty pounds towards the first hundred for a church, the first in the town. But a new difficulty arose. Buddhism does not allow such incursions into its territory without putting up some resistance. Plans had been made to get a church formally organized, and a request for recognition was sent in to the mayor, who refused. Actually he has not been able to stop them, and a church has been formed; but this refusal proved a blessing in disguise, for the quartette set out with a still greater zeal.

The climax of their campaign was reached this spring, when Kagawa visited the town when touring in connexion with the Kingdom of God Movement. In faith the three took the biggest hall in the town. It was packed with seven hundred people. Forty-one people afterwards testified their desire to follow the Christ.

In the meantime, the group meet regularly "in the house of" Imaizumi, not "on the first day of the week," for Sanjo knows no weekly holiday, but on the 1st and 15th of each month, when shops and factories are closed.

Is it not Carlyle who has said: "How did Christianity rise and spread among men? Was it by institutions, and establishments, and well-arranged systems of mechanism? No! It arose in the mystic deeps of man's soul; and was spread by the preaching of the word, by simple, altogether natural and individual efforts; and flew like hallowed fire from heart to heart till all were

purified and illuminated by it." But in this case the spark which kindled the fire was the article in the newspaper.

3. THE PALM-STREWN ROAD¹

"After leaving the main prefectural road our Ford car, hired for the occasion, turned to the left into a narrow lane that twisted in and out between, and connected, the farms of the district. The drive was full of thrills. There were sudden turns, narrow bridges, startled horses and swarms of bands of excited children, all to be safely dealt with; and the driver felt called upon to comfort us again and again with soft words ere we reached the place where he said: 'I can go no farther.' We all got out with sighs of real relief.

"We were bound for the small house that lay hidden in a grove of trees just ahead of us, and then in the full loveliness of their new spring foliage. A young farmer from the neighbourhood carried the Bishop's bag; the deacon's wife carried the basket with the service books; the stout and ever-laughing widow who came with the deacon's wife for company, added to her many good deeds that she carried the basket with the lunches.

"As we walked up the narrow lane that led to the trees we noticed how cool it was, how shady

¹ By the Right Rev. S. Heaslett, D.D., Bishop in south Tokyo; reproduced with his permission from *St. Paul's Guild Magazine*, July, 1928. Since the story was written the young farmer who forms the subject of the story has now practically regained his health.

and well swept. After walking a few steps the deacon, who is very short-sighted, looked down with a puzzled expression on his face. 'This is a palm leaf,' said he. Then a few yards farther on we passed another, and yet another, all laid in order along the path. It was some minutes before we grasped the fact, and some more before we said anything about our discovery. It was rather an awful thought as it entered our minds. Right up to the house palms were laid down every six feet or so for the Bishop and his party to tread on. Thus did the sick man welcome us before we saw him.

"The house was a poor one, even for the country. It had but two rooms with the kitchen, but it was clean and neat. The father of the sick man met us in the open space before the house and welcomed us with all the gravity and courtesy which the Japanese farmer has at his instant command. 'The house,' said he, 'is dirty, but please to come up.' So we took off our shoes, climbed into the main room and squatted on the floor, with the best cushions of the house between us and the hardness of the straw mats. 'You are very welcome,' said he, with a deep bow. 'To-day is a most important and happy occasion,' we replied. Then we sat there for at least half an hour, during which we did little and said less. To misunderstand these silences is to miss one of the main points of Japanese etiquette. In such silences the proper atmosphere is created.

"While we waited, the deacon went in to see the sick man, who was sitting up in the next room in a long cane chair. Presently he came back with

a message for the Bishop. It was written on the back of a picture post card, one of the sick man's most precious possessions. And this is what the message was:

“ ‘The man on the sick-bed makes the following requests. Oh, that after the confirmation the Bishop will deign to preach a sermon in Japanese; short, please. Oh, there is written in the Book of Acts that persons were healed when they received some article from the person of the Bishop who confirmed them. I wish very much to receive something, either a handkerchief or a pencil, or a piece of cotton cloth, or some English writing of simple character; any one of these will do. If it is difficult to give away a handkerchief, I will give a Japanese towel in exchange. Of course, if this is inconvenient now, it will do to send it after the Bishop returns. This is a very rude request, nevertheless I make it.’

“The only son of a small farmer, Watanabe Ryohei had done something to raise himself out of the life of grinding poverty and anxiety that is the common lot of this class in Japan. He managed to gather enough education to fit himself for the work of teacher in the local primary school. But illness swamped all his hopes and laid him aside permanently, to be a chronic invalid in the loneliness of his father's farm-house. With his education he could enlighten his life and make it a little less hopeless by reading, and it was through this medium that relief came to him. He read in the

daily paper a short account of Christianity and an offer to send literature if he would write to the New Life Hall, Tokyo.

"After getting in touch with the New Life scheme of teaching, he drank in the story of salvation with remarkable avidity, so that when the nearest church worker visited him, there was little to do in the way of preparation for baptism. I found such a faith in him as one seldom finds in new believers; it recalled New Testament days. He does not argue, he reasons in this way: 'Such and such things happened in those days. Why not now?' Evidently the idea of the palm leaves and the request for some article from the Bishop is to him a recognition of the authority and power of those who represent the Gospel.

"Magic! Superstition! Unscientific credulity! All these words I know, and I am not ignorant of the things for which they stand. The scientific attitude is very attractive to my own mind. But again and again in my life in the Mission Field I have come across cases in which God has worked in such a way as to confound all theories based on the common-sense view of things; cases where He has worked in a way which quite clearly marks this truth: 'The wind bloweth . . . thou canst not tell.'"

4. ANOTHER "GENTLEMAN IN PRISON"

In her very striking book *A Gentleman in Prison*,¹ the late Dr. Caroline Macdonald tells the story of a murderer whose life was transformed by

¹ C. Macdonald, *A Gentleman in Prison*. S.C.M. Press.

the power of Christ. This is the story of another such.

In the year 1926 a murder of a peculiarly revolting character took place in the suburbs of Tokyo. With a callousness almost incredible, the criminal, after doing the deed, sat down beside the body of his victim and played the flute. He was soon caught and a study of his record revealed an old hand though still a young man. He had already served one term for manslaughter. But the prison books did not tell of a little boy years before who had been to a Sunday school and there learnt to sing the children's hymns to the children's Saviour. A poor home, a slum environment, and bad friends had, however, quite effectively choked the seed, and Tamazawa Hiroshi started out on his career of crime.

His case was still under investigation when a newspaper with one of our articles recalled to him some memory of his childhood, and he wrote to us for information. His acknowledgment of our answer is interesting:

“ I send you a letter with my respects. Just at present I am in the middle of the police examination and am not free to write or receive letters except on matters of faith. My case is one about which it is hard to speak. All that I will say is that I am in on a charge of murder. When I was a little boy I went to Sunday school and learnt hymns, but I used to go simply because it was interesting. This went on until I was about fourteen, after which I started to study

Confucianism. But I stopped this after a year and turned to Buddhism, and had thoughts of becoming a priest. Then finally I gave myself up to a life of crime, and in 1920 was punished for manslaughter. Now I have been arrested again, this time for killing a woman. Now that I am in prison I am wondering as to how, from a philosophical standpoint, I can save my soul. A god certainly rules the world, but whether he be Heaven or a god or a Buddha I do not know. But I believe His power exists. As I close I will be grateful if you will let me have a New Testament."

After reading this I handed it to Miss Macdonald, who went to see him, and her report was far from encouraging. He seemed to be a very poor type, and his conduct in prison had been so unsatisfactory that he had been deprived of the usual privileges accorded to a man awaiting trial. Indeed, she had been the first person from outside to see him for nearly a year. She and her colleague, however, continued to keep in touch with him, but with little response.

The case dragged on, for Japanese law does not hurry. The result was always the same, verdict "Guilty," sentence "Death." By Japanese custom, after a capital sentence has been pronounced execution is generally delayed for about six months, during which every effort is made to bring the prisoner to repentance and a right frame of mind to face the penalty. The Buddhist priest in Ichigaya Prison happened to be a man of real

spiritual character who did all he could to help his charges. He welcomed Miss Macdonald's visits, and in this case asked for her co-operation. Thus Christian and Buddhist alike were praying for the condemned man.

Tamazawa, however, was filled with an obsession for writing his life in order to gain notoriety, and friend and relative were dunned for money to enable him to buy the necessary materials to do so. Thus the days sped along and the hour of doom drew nearer and nearer. Miss Macdonald and her co-worker were indefatigable in their efforts on his behalf, but seemingly in vain. In the meantime many were praying. I made a point of writing to him frequently. His answers showed some response, but did not tally with his behaviour in prison.

Then one day a letter came begging that I would visit him. I placed the matter in Miss Macdonald's hands. If his request seemed to be prompted solely by the idea of getting money or by curiosity, it were better that I should not go. If, on the other hand, a visit might effect something, nothing would keep me back. A telephone message came to say that it were better that I should go. Next morning Miss Macdonald and I went to the prison. The priest gave us a cordial welcome; his face showed that he was sharing a joy that we scarce dared to believe to be true.

An interview in a Japanese prison is not an easy task. The prisoner is behind a screen, his face alone being visible. The visitor stands some six to eight feet away behind a counter, while a warder

sits between. Five minutes is the usual time allowed. It is not an ideal environment in which to lead a soul to Christ. Yet the fact that God has used Miss Macdonald to bring countless men and women, outcasts of society, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God shows that the divine love laughs at locks and bars.

On this occasion, however, we were ushered into a small room with a table in the middle. A moment later Tamazawa and the warder came in and sat opposite us. For nearly an hour we talked about our Lord. But was it only talk? Somehow He Himself seemed to be there, so near and so understanding. Had not He too faced the extreme penalty for Tamazawa and for me? We knelt in prayer and my brother thanked God for what He had done. As we rose to go the jailer, a non-Christian, bade us wait a moment, while in blunt language he told us of the change in one who had caused endless trouble. He didn't know how to explain it, but somehow something had happened. We shook hands and parted—"for a season."

That evening Tamazawa sat down and wrote a long letter to Miss Macdonald's Japanese colleague.

"I cannot say how thankful I am. I am indeed happy. I truly believe that I am now entrusted to the love of God. I now await the day of resurrection. The time is near when I will have to mount the scaffold, but I have no fear. I await the time of my passing to the other side with peace and quietness. I am in a cell with other prisoners, so I have persuaded two of them

to write to you for more information about the way. One of them is now reading the Bible, and *The Traveller's Guide* and a commentary by Kagawa, which you sent me. He has been eighteen times in prison. Please do your best for him. I am filled with an overflowing joy; I am just burning with it."

Next morning Tamazawa passed over very suddenly. Those who were present say that the manner of his going was wonderful.

CHAPTER XI

A CORRESPONDENCE COURSE TOUR

IN one of the earlier chapters reference was made to the Correspondence Course for inquirers who, for any reason, cannot get into touch with the nearest church.

From time to time such inquirers, on the completion of their course, have been put into touch with the nearest church, and have eventually been baptized, occasionally the first time they have ever been inside a church building.

In the spring of 1932 we had four such members ready for baptism yet remote from any church. It seemed a pity that they should not be received into the Church, and so I decided to visit them myself, the nearest pastor in each case accompanying me.

The first person was a store-keeper in an isolated part of Hokkaido, a thousand miles from Tokyo. As the train crept along the northern coast we passed through mile after mile of virgin forest broken here and there by fresh-water lakes, scenery not unlike that through which the C.P.R. passes in northern Ontario. In places a small clearing marked the spot where a settler from the south had established his home, while every few miles

there was a collection of wooden shacks which formed the local post town and shopping centre. At last we reached the little station of Sarufutsu, a name of unmistakable Ainu origin. The candidate was on the platform to meet us, together with a small party of his friends. He was the eldest son of a family of nine. His first touch with Christianity had been through reading Kagawa's *New Life through God*.¹ When he saw our advertisement he joined the New Life Society and enrolled in the Correspondence Course. He was a difficult man to teach owing to his intense reserve, but he seemed ready for baptism.

One of the problems had been to what church he should be linked on. The nearest churches were those to the south, a matter of five or six hours in the train, but if he were introduced to them the odds were that he would never be visited. On the other hand, the pastor in Saghalien, who lived nearly a day away to the north on a neighbouring island, would pass through Sarufutsu about twice a year on his way to Synod or some other conference; so it was decided to invite him to be pastor.

The town of Sarufutsu is a typical colonial town with its rough road, its simple shacks, its rude shrine, and its one village store.

Our man's home was the store. We were received with that quiet courtesy always extended to a guest, and after a short talk were shown into an inner room to rest. Younger brothers and sisters peeped at us from time to time through the

¹ English edition, published by the Student Christian Movement Press.

holes in the paper doors, but we were able, nevertheless, to get an uninterrupted talk with the candidate, and shortly after noon we had the baptism service.

After the midday meal a few of his friends gathered to learn more of that way which their friend had decided to follow. I suppose that it was the first time the Gospel had ever been preached in that town. We told him that if he wanted to escape the loneliness of being the only Christian it was up to him to make more Christians, and suggested that he should get a Sunday school going. The difficulty was that he had no idea how a school should be run, and had only once heard a Christian hymn! So we had a practice then and there, but it was clear that the prospective superintendent would not be of much use so far as the musical side of the school would be concerned. Happily one of the audience, a girl of about twenty-two, had attended a Sunday school in Tokyo and remembered some of the old tunes. They planned to get a school going without delay. In addition it was arranged that an evangelistic meeting should be held when the pastor would be passing that way again, some four months later. Thus the Church grows.

I journeyed on to a town on the south coast of Hokkaido, where years ago the C.M.S. worked, but gave it up. Twenty years ago a young medical student was adopted into a doctor's family with the idea that he should ultimately marry the only child, a common custom in Japan. He qualified, took a practice and married, and their home was blessed by the coming of three children. Then he went

down with consumption. His father-in-law acted swiftly and isolated him from his family, his old mother being called in to nurse him; and when there seemed no hope of his recovery he was divorced, and from that day has not had one word from his family. This happened two years ago. As a young man he had been of a religious disposition, and had been taught by a famous teacher of the Shingon sect of Buddhism, and "baptized" into that faith. Its philosophical ideas suited his scientific temperament. Then the domestic tragedy happened, and he turned to his religion for comfort and found none. During his earlier days, when he walked the wards, he had got into touch with some priests of the Shin sect and had been much touched by their sympathy and faith. So it was to this sect, with its doctrine of Amida the saviour, that he now turned and found the comfort for which he sought, until his scientific mind began to ask questions about Amida. To his chagrin he found that so far as anybody knew Amida had never existed; he was no more than the creation of man's mind, an idea rather than a person. In desperation he now turned to Nichiren, the great Buddhist prophet of the thirteenth century. Of his historicity there could be no doubt, but his intolerance offered little balm to a wounded soul. A book by Kagawa turned his thoughts towards Christianity. He had read the Bible a little before, but this time something appealed to him, and as he was already familiar with our weekly articles, he wrote to us and later enrolled in the Correspondence Course. It had been a sheer joy to take him

through. In the earlier part of his course his answers had been tinged by his Buddhist background, but as the wonder of Christ, first as his Ideal, then as God, then as Saviour and Lord, had broken in on his longing soul, he realized that his long quest was over—he had found! His answers thereafter simply radiated with joy, and can one wonder after twenty years' search and nothing to comfort an aching heart?

I sat in the room by his bedside as he told his story. We found that there was one other Christian in the town who had long lost touch with organized religion; but on the morning following he joined us in the simple baptism service. The doctor insisted on getting up and donning his best silk robes as an act of reverence to our Lord. An hour later we were on our way once more, but since then word has come in to say that the two of them are now meeting week by week to worship our Lord with the help of the Service by post, and that they have now been joined by another, the local dentist. And so the Church grows.

Nearly twenty-four hours later I sat with one of our country pastors at the side of a little mountain stream. We were on our way to see a charcoal-burner, an old man of nearly sixty. Some years before his wife had brought back some purchases wrapped in a newspaper in which was one of our articles. He applied and later enrolled in the Correspondence Course. He had only had an elementary school education, but he plodded along faithfully at his own speed, and though his answers would have required much charity had they been

marked, yet they were very real. When he had removed to another part of Hokkaido I got him into touch with the nearest church, and the pastor had paid him a visit. He had found a simple old fellow and his wife having family prayers morning and evening, keeping Sunday, yet working so well the other six days that the firm, which had a seven-day week, raised no objections. To all intents and purposes they were Christians. I asked the pastor to find out whether he wished to be baptized. The answer came back: "I have only been preparing six years, my Lord was thirty. For one who has sinned so much as I, it is too early yet." I didn't want to press him, but the answer made me ten times more determined to see him.

As we sat by the river, Matsuura and his wife joined us. They were on the way to meet us by the next train. "Matsuura," I said, "you know baptism is not like a graduation ceremony; it is rather a school entrance ceremony." "A school entrance and not a graduation?" he replied. "I thought it meant graduation, and I knew I hadn't gone far enough. Then is there any reason why I shouldn't be baptized at once, here, now?" I didn't answer him immediately as I wanted to see more where he was. For an hour we had fellowship together, and bit by bit it came home to me that I was talking to one who was living in the very presence of God. His knowledge of the Bible was impressive. But what about his wife, for she wanted to be baptized too? He had taught her from the course as he had learnt from it himself. Any doubt was dispelled when we joined together

in prayer; their words were of people accustomed to speak with God. "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" So there in a church whose walls were the fresh green of spring, while its roof was heaven's blue, we held our service and two people were received into the great family of God.

My last visit was to a fishing port on the main island, my companion a Japanese *padré* who in his younger days had served as "boy" to Jack London, the novelist, the candidate the eldest son of the local draper.

As a lad he had studied Marxism with his companions, but had finally given it up on account of its doctrine of force. Then a friend suggested to him that he might find that for which he sought in Christianity—and he did. But not without fierce persecution from relative and companion alike.

In the meantime, unknown to him, an old friend of his schooldays lay ill in another port some fifteen miles up the coast. He, too, had seen the article in the paper and had started the Correspondence Course. Not knowing of his illness I had written to him suggesting that he should try and attend the baptism service, and by that means had re-introduced the two to one another. On the evening before the baptism the candidate got this letter from his friend:

"It is now the season of green leaves. How are you getting on? I have not written, I fear, for a long time, but I do thank you for your letter.

I also went up to Tokyo. It was five years ago, and I got various jobs in order to earn money to put myself through college, and it was hard work, I can tell you. Now as a result I am ill in bed, and my first duty is to get well again.

"Before I was taken ill I did not take any special interest in religion. Instead I looked upon the Buddhist temple, which happened to be next door, as merely a place for funerals. You may imagine, therefore, how I felt when I got ill and had no religious faith to help me. I tried various forms of Buddhist prayers, and all sorts of ways for getting faith, but in vain. Perhaps I was not earnest enough, but I must confess I could not bring myself to believe in such unscientific and senseless things. I also tried the system of Zen meditation, but the more I tried it the more puzzled I got, and I finally gave it up.

"It was just this time last year that I began to pray to God through Christ, and I entered the New Life Society.

"You also seem to have had a struggle, and I can sympathize with you. I have been suffering a good deal during the last few years, but I don't mind it now. I think we have to bear our suffering believing in our Heavenly Father's care. 'Salvation through suffering,' as somebody put it, and I think it is true. Poverty, failure, even sickness I can now bear with thanksgiving, for they are the way by which I can glorify God's work. I now see that if I had succeeded in my original plans and had never got ill, I probably

would never have sought after God. Suffering, then, in reality is the grace of God. What a wonderful and profound thing is His will."

The candidate has promised to go and visit him and help him on his way, and the *padré* will plan a trip in the autumn. In the meantime he is carrying on with his course, and learning more and more the meaning of that grace which he has experienced on his sick-bed.

Early the following morning we had the service. The little home in which it was held was right on the shore. The loch with its blue waters sparkling in the morning sun stretched away to the south, while pine-clad island and headland added fresh colour and beauty to the scene. In the far distance could be seen the white breakers of the Pacific. Nature and man alike were pulsing with the new life of spring. It was a perfect day for a baptism.

And so the tour came to an end. Five lonely folk received into the family of God—is that all? No! four churches-to-be, founded in colonial township and coast town, in mountain hamlet and in fishing port. It is ever thus that the Gospel spreads.

CHAPTER XII

THE PRESS IN A NATIONAL MISSION

At the Triennial Synod of the Nippon Seikokai in 1926 it was resolved to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Church in Japan by holding a National Mission, called "The Awakening Movement."

The Missionary Council approached the New Life Hall and invited its co-operation. It was decided to set up inside the Hall "The Literary Evangelistic Bureau of the Church," in charge of a committee of six under the chairmanship of Dr. Motoda, then Bishop of Tokyo. To this Bureau was assigned the task of helping the Mission by means of the printed page.

They decided to use two main methods: a special mission newspaper, and articles in the secular press.

The special mission newspaper was christened the *Seikokai Newspaper*, and consisted of three issues. In appearance it was exactly like any other newspaper. It had leading articles, news paragraphs, interviews, discussions of everyday problems, social service news, women's and children's columns, book advertisements, and in one issue, at least on

the notorious "third page," the story of a murderer! But its one message was the Gospel.

The paper was sold to the churches at the lowest rates, and in one case a localized edition was brought out. An edition of a hundred thousand copies was exhausted and many requests came in that it should be a permanent feature, but this proved impossible.

The issue of this paper was not, however, the main feature of the Bureau's activities. The more important task was the use of the provincial press alongside the local missions.

Hitherto evangelistic activity had been confined to the immediate neighbourhood of the church concerned. By means of public meetings, posters and personal work, it was possible to bring a few hundreds within sound or sight of the Christian message. Such methods, of course, have a permanent value. But at the same time it is, however, a moot point if, in an attempt to reach the nation with the Christian Gospel, they are sufficient in an age when the whole population can be reached through the daily paper. It was decided, therefore, to use the secular press so far as funds and conditions allowed.

As the time for a local mission drew near, an article appeared in the local papers on the need of a national awakening to righteousness (the name of the year period was "Great Righteousness"), followed a week later by one announcing the forthcoming mission and introducing the speakers. On the opening day a message appeared from the missionary himself, followed by articles, by advertisements of the meetings, or further messages. It was

made a rule to have articles by the local clergy also, on whom would fall the responsibility for the follow-up. Every article ended with an invitation to those unable to attend the meetings to apply for a specimen copy of the *Seikokai Newspaper*. Between three and four thousand people availed themselves of this offer.

In the year of the Mission central advertising was stopped, and all efforts concentrated on local advertising. Articles appeared in some thirty papers, stretching from Hokkaido in the north to Formosa in the south, and no doubt many more would have been used had the local clergy realized in time the opportunity before them. In many cases the articles were inserted free; in all cases substantial reductions were made. In some places it was possible, through a judicious use of local rivalries, to secure purely nominal terms from the press. In some cases negotiations were carried through direct, in some cases by the workers on the spot, while in some cases the whole plan was entrusted to the Mannensha Advertising Agency, a big Christian advertising firm. In every case it was made clear that the article was part of the work of the Church itself.

In a work of this kind it is almost impossible to sum up results, certainly quite impossible to reduce them to statistics. A few instances may be taken from the reports that came in.

From the standpoint of a newspaper evangelist Hokkaido is almost an ideal field. The island is self-contained and is more or less covered by two newspapers, both sympathetic to religion. The

acting Bishop in Hokkaido, an Irishman though of few words, wrote afterwards:

"I found in Hokkaido that the publicity obtained through the Newspaper Work had been of very great value. The Church became known; the Mission became known; and the audiences were affected by the publicity. Everyone was enthusiastic about this method."

The chairman of the Diocesan Evangelistic Committee reported:

"The Newspaper Work as a first experiment has been a success. In this place very good results were seen. The advertisements were put into the paper in the form of articles, and as they varied in length and appearance, they did not give the impression of being advertisements. I myself was frankly amazed at the power of the method. - The newspaper editors and publishers were very sympathetic and gave the best advice as to how things should be put in. They even attended the meetings themselves. Though the advertisements were put in free by agreement, yet I think it will be well if you send them some small token of your appreciation. I think I will try and write articles myself from time to time to appear in a similar manner. The church was full for the first time in its history."

In addition to the above, five hundred applications were received by the Central Office from Hokkaido alone.

The system of giving a present, alluded to above,

is common in Japan. In this case an illustrated *Life of Christ* was sent in acknowledgment.

In one of the prefectures not far from Tokyo, where the S.P.G. has been at work, two of the local papers were used. The Tokyo papers are the more influential and have the bigger circulation, but expense prevented their use. Writing after the Mission a pastor said:

“We are rejoicing at having had flourishing and much-blessed meetings. I would like to see similar articles every time we have a mission in order to let people know as widely as possible about our church. As the position of the church is not very central, many people do not know where it is; and as the building is not a big one, we have always considered an audience, on the occasion of a mission, a good one if it reached fifty. This time I estimated that on account of the articles we might get a hundred. Unfortunately, just before the first meeting began we had a terrific thunderstorm; but we got our hundred. On the next night it was fine, and the church was packed with two hundred people. So full, indeed it was, that there was not room to insert a gimlet. Such a thing has never been known in the history of the church.”

In Kyoto use was made of the *Osaka Mainichi Newspaper*. Writing afterwards the Bishop of Kyoto said:

“The newspaper articles were very valuable in the Mission. All the clergy were delighted when they were told that they could have such

articles published, concurrent with the meetings. At the time, I heard many of them speak in a most gratifying way of the articles that were published. They felt that the contents of them, and their widespread publication, could not but be a great asset in the work. I heard a number of them also speak of individuals who had come to the meetings because of seeing the newspaper articles. Personally, I have felt very highly gratified that the newspapers were not only willing to publish the articles, but offered to reduce the rates very considerably. To have them offer co-operation in what was purely an evangelistic campaign indicated a degree of sympathy with the Christian cause which ought not to be overlooked."

Finally, a word should be said about the plans in the capital itself. The Tokyo papers are national. It hardly seemed right to use a lot of money on advertisements which would go all over the country in order to advertise meetings in churches in one city. The situation called for new plans. I suggested that the Mission should open with a big united evangelistic meeting in one of the big public halls, and promised that if they arranged it, the Bureau should attend to publicity. The scheme was approved, and the details left to the other members of the Committee, while we concentrated on the press side. Accordingly, articles appeared in the Tokyo papers introducing the Mission and the missionaries. But the *pièce de résistance* was an advertisement which appeared the

day before the big meeting on the back of the tram tickets. The following is a reproduction with an English translation of the form that this advertisement took :

動運醒覺國全會公聖本日
會演講大教督基
 師牧藤後・長弓田深・士博出名・士博田元
 揮指揮教廷・奏演團歌聖會公聖京東
堂講聞新日朝 夕七時
 新生館

NIHON SEIKOKAI AWAKENING MOVEMENT
GREAT CHRISTIAN MEETING
 SPEAKERS: BISHOPS MOTODA & HAIDE, REVS FUKADA & GOTO
 TOKYO SEIKOKAI CHOR - CONDUCTOR, PROFESSOR TSUJI
ASAHI PUBLIC HALL
 BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD

The united prayer meeting four days before was an assurance of what was to follow. On the evening the hall, which seats a thousand, was packed with fourteen hundred, an overflow meeting of six hundred was held over a mile away, and another thousand went home disappointed. As a further result, the missions in the various churches of the diocese were well above the average.

Of course this result was not due solely to the press work; the co-operation and goodwill of the churches was an even bigger factor. But if the appearance of those who attended the big meeting is any indication, there is no doubt that a very large percentage were of a type who do not go normally to church.

Inasmuch as the use of the press was a novel

method, it may be a good plan to summarize the lessons learnt.

Let us recapitulate the facts.

In the first place, the friendliness of the press, if wisely approached, was most marked. This is all the more striking in a land like Japan, where Christianity is not the national religion, and where religious articles are not so common as in England and America.

Secondly, the articles brought people to listen to a message which the churches were anxious to give, and which the conditions of the time demanded.

In the third place, they brought the church's existence before the public. The value of this was not confined to the cities alone; it introduced the church to the country population. We heard of cases, too, of country folk making relatively long journeys to attend meetings of which otherwise they would never have heard.

Lastly, the church, by means of correspondence, was brought into touch with thousands of people not touched in any other way.

What, then, are the lessons which the above facts suggest?

The first is that in any evangelistic effort, whether nation-wide or local, everything is to be gained by a judicious use of the press. Hitherto the Church in Japan, if not elsewhere, has tended to limit a great message by small methods. One of the secrets of Kagawa's influence is that he thinks out new methods suited to the age. Nobody, of course, would belittle the spiritual factor, but surely the press is one of the new areas of infinite possibility.

In the second place, some provision must be made for those who cannot attend. Many of them are potential church members if they are treated with sympathy. Whether it is better to have a central bureau to which such inquirers can write, or to have some local address, must be determined by circumstances.

Lastly, the aid of the expert is necessary. Not everybody can compose an article for the press. A religious writer needs to have a journalistic touch if his matter is to make effective appeal. In the planning out of advertisements, also, the help of the specialist is needed. In short, if the Church is to make the fullest use of this new instrument, it will need a special bureau whose function is to study, learn, and use the situation accordingly.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GROWTH OF A MOVEMENT

“Nothing in progression can rest on its original plan. We might as well think of rocking a grown man in the cradle of an infant.”—BURKE.

THERE is one fascinating feature about Newspaper Evangelism: it offers abundant scope to the pioneer. It is linked on the one hand to the press, a body perhaps more alive to fresh methods and ideas than any other organization. On the other hand, through correspondence, it is in touch with individuals of every type. It is almost impossible to get into a groove.

Hitherto this book has been very largely taken up with the story of but one Newspaper Evangelistic centre in Japan, but it is inevitable that a plan originally worked out by an individual in a remote part of the country, under circumstances limited by local conditions, should, if successful, be applied elsewhere. In this chapter I propose to tell something of the story of its expansion.

The use of the press for Christian purposes goes back over forty years to the time when a C.M.S. lady missionary inserted a text in the local paper,

and though later experiments were made in the use of the press as an evangelistic agency, yet, as was mentioned above, the credit for working along scientific lines belongs to the Rev. A. Pieters, a missionary of the Reformed Church of the U.S.A. He not only laid down the main principles of the follow-up work, but also of its wider application.

Before, however, tracing their development, mention should be made of an experiment in the press by the leaders of the Japanese Church in 1915, on the occasion of a national mission. On this particular occasion it was decided to use the Japanese press, and material was published in newspapers having a combined circulation of several millions. The scheme was largely financed by Japanese gifts, with assistance from the Mission Budget, while the articles were contributed by the leading clergy. The experiment made a very good impression, produced a large response, and met with the cordial approval of the Japanese Christian press.

The great pity is that this valuable experiment, though planned, financed, and carried through by Japanese initiative, came to an end on account of the shortage of funds. If the various missionary societies had offered financial co-operation, the story of Christianity in Japan might have followed a very different course. Unfortunately the relations between Church and Mission at that time had not attained the same degree of intimacy that they have to-day.

Nevertheless Dr. Pieters came forward with a plan for work on a nation-wide scale. His idea was to have central offices in the two or three big news-

paper centres, with subsidiary offices in every prefecture. Each central office would be under a manager with executive authority, appointed by a board of directors set up by the co-operating bodies. The local offices would be under similar committees, subject to the inspection of the manager of the central office of their area. The central office would provide material and serve as a distributing house; the local offices would be responsible for the follow-up work. Dr. Pieters's great emphasis was on the missionary side. He laid his proposals before the Federation of Christian Missions in 1918, but apparently made no attempt to interest the Japanese Churches.

In 1919 a Newspaper Evangelism Committee was appointed by the Federation to undertake such co-operative work. After defining the duties of the Committee in Japan, they added the following resolution :

" We recommend this committee to the missions for such grants in aid as their circumstances and interest in this form of work indicate as suitable, and . . . we approve of the committee soliciting funds in the United States, Canada, and England, in so far as such solicitation does not conflict with the policies of the home Boards and Societies, especially from parties not at present contributing to existing forms of work."

With the above terms of reference it was quite obvious, if anything was to be done, that additional steps should be taken outside. So in 1918, in anticipation, the Association for the Promotion of

Newspaper Evangelism was launched, which soon secured a membership of nearly two hundred missionaries.

Dr. Pieters's scheme called for an annual budget of £50,000, a sum sufficient to kill it before its birth. But hopes were raised by the launching in the United States and Canada of the Inter-Church World Movement. The Great War had shown the powerful appeal that big plans made to the American mentality. Certain missionary leaders conceived the idea of making such an appeal on behalf of the missionary cause, for the provision of special types of work held up on account of the shortage of funds. The Newspaper Evangelism Scheme was included in its programme.

The collapse of the Movement meant the postponement of Dr. Pieters's plan on the scale he contemplated. This was not necessarily a bad thing, as there were certain fundamental weaknesses in the proposal which it might have been difficult to rectify had the Newspaper Evangelism Committee suddenly found itself possessed of large funds.

In the meantime the co-operative work was begun on a more modest scale with Fukuoka, the capital of the southern island of Kyushu, as central office. Dr. Pieters resigned from the Eternal Life Hall at Oita, the scene of his experiments, and was appointed manager at Fukuoka. The new venture was sponsored by three missions, while the board of directors was the special committee set up by the Federation. Here the first attempt, apart from the Japanese experiment, was made to utilize the central papers. The *Fukuoka Nichinichi* is one of

the three big provincial papers in Japan. A contract was made by which Christian articles were to appear every week. These produced a very large response. The work gained unexpected publicity through an article by Dr. Pieters, challenging the historicity of the sun-goddess, the ancestress of the Imperial House. The article would probably have passed unnoticed had not the local association of Shinto priests taken up the matter. Orders were sent down from the Home Office to suppress the paper, and Dr. Pieters was summoned before the Public Procurator and ordered to explain things. This he was able to do quite satisfactorily and the storm blew over. The one tangible result was a doubling of the number of applications for more information about Christianity.

In 1922 Dr. Pieters was obliged to leave Japan on account of family reasons, and an Anglican missionary, the Rev. F. W. Rowlands, was appointed his successor, thus bringing yet another denomination into the co-operative scheme. With Dr. Pieters's retirement the A.P.N.E., as the Association was called, came to an end, and with the formation of the National Christian Council the Committee on Newspaper Evangelism was dissolved.

The experiences of the A.P.N.E. and the work at Fukuoka, however, taught newspaper evangelists some very valuable lessons. It soon became evident that the movement could not go forward if it was purely a missionary activity, as one of the chief purposes of Newspaper Evangelism is the linking of the individual to the local church. In the second place, the plan was too rigid. It did not

allow sufficiently for local initiative, nor encourage local autonomy. Further, it took but little cognizance of denominational loyalties. Thirdly, full allowance must be made for natural growth. A huge organization would have collapsed under its own weight.

In the meantime, missionaries and their Japanese colleagues were starting similar work in various provincial capitals. In the north Dr. Noss and his colleague, Mr. Tsukada, have been the main movers in a co-operative effort which has concentrated on the untouched rural areas. The adjustment of Church and Mission relationships, however, has proved a matter of continual difficulty, but to this office belongs the honour of being the first to try the experiment of the Rural Gospel School, one of the most effective ways of country evangelism. The office, during the farmers' slack season, invited about twenty of their most hopeful inquirers in to the capital for a week's residential conference, during which they received instruction in the Christian faith and practice, and also advice on rural problems. In Nagano prefecture a Canadian Methodist missionary, Dr. E. C. Hennigar,¹ used the press and the resulting inquirers to launch successfully a movement for the abolition of licensed vice in the prefecture. In yet another branch the newspaper work was used to get into the homes of the peasantry with magic lantern and the "movie," and it is estimated that ten thousand people have heard the Gospel by this means.²

¹ *Vide Japan Christian Quarterly*, Vol. VI, p. 173.

² *Vide Japan Christian Quarterly*, Vol. VII, p. 53.

Though the A.P.N.E. had come to an end, it was quite clear that some form of organization was necessary in order to provide a channel for the exchange of ideas. Accordingly, in 1926 the Newspaper and Correspondence Evangelism Association was formed by a small group, representing some seven newspaper evangelism centres. Its functions were purely informative and consultative, but it achieved one great success. It brought into the movement two Japanese leaders, destined to play a still larger part in its development. The chairman was Mr. H. Nagao, late divisional manager of the Imperial Government Railways, head of the Electrical Bureau of the City of Tokyo, and Member of Parliament. His wide experience and touch with leaders in the press world have proved an inestimable asset to the movement. At the same time the Rev. M. S. Murao, Fellow of St. Paul's University and a writer and translator of repute, was appointed secretary-manager. On his shoulders has fallen the bulk of the work, and much of its growth has been due to his vision. In 1928 the N.C.E.A. met for a residential conference at Hachiman, on Lake Biwa, which was attended not only by delegates from all over Japan, but also by representatives of two of the largest papers in the country. This served to bring the movement before the press world, and to form links which were of great potential value.

During my absence in England in 1928-9, Mr. H. V. Nicholson, a member of the Friends' Mission, carried into effect an idea he had conceived of syndicating articles by prominent Japanese Christian

leaders among the papers of the country. In this he received the cordial support of Dr. Kagawa, who himself promised one such article every month. As many as sixty papers were reached in this manner, the experiment opening a door of infinite possibilities. At the same time another valuable lesson was being learnt in Tokyo, which enjoys a unique prestige in the intellectual life of Japan. In many cases, when local offices evinced no great interest in the Christian articles, the same articles from their Tokyo offices would meet with ready acceptance.

In the meantime the Japanese press itself was beginning to awake to the news value of religious articles, and two of the leading papers started to insert articles of this character. Yet a third made a point of inviting its readers to state their religious difficulties, and announced the appointment of a body of spiritual advisers, of whom almost all were Christians.

These factors came before the N.C.E.A. at its annual conference in 1929, and it was decided to extend the scope of the Association; the name was also changed to the Japan Christian News Agency. Its function is to distribute among all affiliated bodies all literature produced by each, to produce and distribute among such bodies suitable articles for the press, and to deal with such applications for Christian teaching as a result of the co-operative work. It is also prepared to act on behalf of any affiliated body in its negotiations with the press. The clause with regard to the handling of applications was added at the annual meeting in

1931. The idea is not that the Agency should undertake follow-up work, but that it should serve as the distributing centre for applications received through co-operative work done in its name.

This plan arose in connexion with a proposal to use the *Tokyo Asahi*, one of the four big papers, by a group of newspaper offices, no single one of which could undertake the task. The articles appear in the name of the J.C.N.A. (incidentally providing it with some useful publicity), and as the applications come in they are passed on to the offices responsible for the areas in which the applicants live. A note is sent to each applicant with a list of the branches of the J.C.N.A., informing him from which one he will hear. This plan has now been extended to the Osaka co-operative work.

The J.C.N.A. was accorded a recognized place in the Christian Movement in Japan in 1930, when it was elected as one of the co-operating members of the National Christian Council, with the right to send a delegate to the annual meeting. Further, the Council itself, which is largely composed of Japanese, after careful investigation of the whole method and achievement of Newspaper Evangelism, passed the following resolution at its annual meeting in 1931:

“ We recognize the efficiency of utilizing the daily papers for evangelistic purposes, and the value of the work of the J.C.N.A., and we recommend that suitable steps be taken to help that organization. In order to accomplish this we

recommend that consideration be given to the following items :

“(a) The production of suitable articles for MSS., and the offer of the same to the press.

“(b) The prompt reporting of all Christian activities.

“(c) Arrangement for co-operation in Christian newspaper advertisements.

“(d) The investigation of the further use of the paper, and the report of the results of such investigations to the churches.”

In other words, a complete endorsement of the programme of the J.C.N.A.

In the meantime the Agency has not been inactive. Two Christian articles, one short and one long, are now issued every week and syndicated to between forty and fifty papers. In 1930 the *Tokyo Nichinichi* published twenty-six of these articles as ordinary news matter. In addition, negotiations have been put through with many papers, in every case with a substantial reduction on the ordinary rates. In many other ways the existence of the Agency is being kept before the public. All this is being done by men with full-time duties of their own, and on a budget of £200 per annum. It is their conviction that what has been achieved is but a foretaste of what may come if the Christian Church will awake to this its day of opportunity.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FUTURE OF NEWSPAPER EVANGELISM

THE future of Newspaper Evangelism depends upon vision.

1. In Japan to-day the soul of a great people is on trek. Buddhism as a philosophy will live. As a vital religion it is on the wane. Shinto has been dethroned as a religion by the state which it professes to exalt. As a philosophy it has nothing to offer. Communism is making its bid for the soul of Japan, making capital out of her economic poverty, but it would seem as if she must make way to another god, Nationalism. And when Nationalism goes, some other god will take its place, and the soul of Japan will go on, restless and unsatisfied.

But what of Christianity as a religion? Is there no truth in the solemn words of Dr. John Mott: "It is startling to reflect on the imminent possibility that, if we turn a deaf ear to the summons of the present most critical and fateful hour, the world mission of the Christian faith may fail"?¹ One thing is certain, the soul of Japan is looking to Christianity and wondering whether in its principles is to be found the way out of a life which is

¹ Mott, *The Present-Day Summons*, p. 12. S.C.M. Press.

clogged. The hundred thousand people who have written for more information are the evidence.

2. The Japanese to-day are an educated people. Look at the passengers in the train; they are all reading. Open your paper—no! don't open it; look on the first page. It is devoted entirely to book advertisements. Mr. Bunshiro Suzuki, city editor of the *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, estimates that half the homes in Japan take a newspaper; the other half see it.

In the presentation of the Gospel this factor should not be ignored.

3. The Japanese press is increasingly interested in religious articles. When the biggest paper in the country starts a religious column, drops it, and then in deference to its readers' wishes starts again; when another big paper has a religious editor and a daily religious column, and chooses as the man to be responsible for it a Christian pastor; when it is the common thing for a paper to have a story or a picture of the Christ when Christmas comes round; when the newspapers in one of the strongest Buddhist centres in the country vie with one another to secure Christian articles; when in every single case substantially reduced terms have been given, who can deny the cumulative appeal of these facts?

Such is the background against which we must see visions.

Like the press elsewhere, newspapers both lead and are led by public opinion. They often show a genuine spirit of altruism and interest in the uplift of society. The increase in the number of religious articles also is dictated by a genuine desire to publish matter

of an elevating character. Here lies the opportunity of the newspaper evangelist in articles of a religious character, attractive, sympathetic, and alive to present situations. If the Japan Christian News Agency is in a position to supply such material, and to keep it constantly before editors, the press is ready to regard such a venture with favour. Editors are accustomed to using outside agencies; to patronize another agency providing first-class religious news matter is nothing strange. The experience of the J.C.N.A., in fact, would suggest that they would welcome such provision.

But there is one possible qualification. A newspaper may appoint a religious editor of its own, independent of the J.C.N.A. organization; but here again experience would suggest that he would welcome co-operation.

In the second place, there is the question of the syndication of religious articles. So far I have had in mind chiefly the big central papers, but what about the hundreds of provincial papers? The method of syndicating articles, which is common in the United States, has now come to stay in Japan. Already the pictures on "Bringing up father" are a regular feature in many papers. The provincial papers are often short of material, and a supply of good articles of this kind at cheap rates would be doing them a good turn.

Thirdly, there is the matter of writers. The secular press world in Japan has not yet got its James Douglas or Hugh Redwood or Bruce Barton. The *Hokkai Times*, unlike its London namesake, does not yet publish a weekly article "From a

correspondent." But in this respect there is no need for anxiety. There are already several first-class writers in the field who are getting that "press touch," and only waiting the opportunity to become the spiritual friend and guide of thousands of readers.

To sum up, the press of Japan offers a field to the newspaper evangelist provided he is alert and wise. He may attain a position by which he may become indispensable. He can produce goods for which there is a potential demand.

The above remarks, however, do not touch either the question of providing religious news, or the insertion of advertisements to secure correspondence, which is a special feature of Newspaper Evangelism. In the provision of news of constructive value, e.g. the latest news of the campaign against licensed vice, or the opinion of a prominent thinker on some question of the day, there is need of far greater publicity. An Agency special correspondent has a big field in this direction. It is an interesting fact that the article provided by Mr. Nicholson in his experiment, which secured the greatest degree of publicity, was one by Mr. H. Nagao on "The Imperial House and *Saké*."

When we turn to the follow-up work, we find that the articles themselves produce a certain amount of correspondence. A couple of articles by my colleague, Rev. M. S. Murao, which appeared in the *Tokyo Nichinichi* on the subject of "Christianity and Communism," produced protests from both sides!

In dealing with this problem there are two

possible lines of solution. The first is to leave the matter of advertising and follow-up to the Christian newspaper offices—the chain of New Life Halls from Akita in the north to Seoul in Korea. This preserves freedom of action though it costs money. The services of the Agency would continue as at present. But there is another field of great hope. Several of the bigger papers include among their many activities that of adviser on life's problems. For example, the *Osaka Mainichi* preserves a travelling clinic on the canals of Osaka. The *Miyako*, another Tokyo paper, offers free legal advice. The *Hochi Newspaper*, a big daily published in Tokyo, has a special department to which the poor may come for advice in matters of health. Its weekly edition extends the invitation to those in spiritual distress. It is significant that all the advisers are Christians. There is no reason why this idea should not be developed indefinitely. Of course it may mean co-operating with the representatives of other religions, but this need not weaken the effectiveness of the Christian advice offered. This in itself is a big and unoccupied field for the J.C.N.A., whether it handles such inquiries as an independent agency or whether it provides the staff to man such a consultation bureau.

The above remarks are a vision of things to be based on things which are. The Agency has made sufficient experiment to justify success if it is given the opportunity, say for a period of seven years. By the end of that time there is every reason to expect that the work will be so established as to continue on its own income. Such a plan

asks for a modest £1,000 per annum for seven years only,¹ a fraction of the money often spent on evangelistic work of a far less profitable character.

But the question will be asked, should it not be left to the Japanese Church to put this thing through for itself? The Church in Japan has already a task in front of it in the evangelization of its people and the support of its ministry, which in proportion to its size is far in excess of that confronting the home Churches. People sometimes forget that the Church has but three hundred thousand members in a population of sixty million. The way in which it is measuring up to its task has won for it a place of honour among the "Younger Churches." That Japanese financial support in this venture will be forthcoming there is not the slightest doubt, but it is in work of this type, not merely desirable, but in view of the times actually necessary, that the help of the "Older Churches" is now needed. The Japanese Church has already had a vision of what might be when the press is used for the extension of the Kingdom. The vital question is, have the Mother Churches the vision also? For it is nothing less than

The Good News about Jesus Christ,
 Week in, week out,
 In 300 newspapers in Japan,
 Touching
 Regularly and persistently,
 Effectively and appealingly,
 SIXTY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE.

¹ For details of the Budget see Appendix IV, p. 160.

APPENDIX I

THE CIRCULATION OF JAPANESE NEWSPAPERS

N.B.—The figures below are as accurate as can be obtained. No official figures are published.

Osaka Mainichi ^a	.	.	.	1,100,000
Osaka Asahi ^b	.	.	.	1,000,000
Tokyo Nichinichi ^a	.	.	.	850,000
Tokyo Asahi ^b	.	.	.	800,000
Yomiuri	.	.	.	400,000
Hochi	.	.	.	350,000
Fukuoka Nichinichi	.	.	.	300,000
Miyako	.	.	.	200,000
The Housewife's Friend (Magazine)	.	.	.	900,000

^{ab} Published by the same firms respectively.

APPENDIX II

SOME LIBRARY STATISTICS

Explanation of tables overleaf:

A=Number of books in class.

B=Number of books lent to men.

C=Number of books lent to women.

D=Total number of books lent.

E=Average times each volume lent.

From the tables below three points are worthy of comment:

1. Of the thirty-one books specified, eight, or just over one quarter, are by foreign writers.

2. Kagawa is by a long way the most popular Christian writer. Of the above total nine are by Kagawa. He is followed by Yamamuro with three.

3. Of the thirty-one most popular books mentioned below, only five are issued by regular Christian publishing houses, and of these three come from the Salvation Army. The remainder are produced by ordinary publishers.

Class	Most popular books				
	A	B	C	D	E
Biography	151	2814	501	3315	22
Children	142	709	131	840	7
Commentaries	139	823	147	970	7
Cultural	427	5456	992	6448	15
Fiction	65	2435	747	3282	50
History	49	421	51	472	10
Miscellaneous	52	587	52	639	12
Poetry	36	454	104	558	16
Rural Problems	45	44	2	46	1
Social Problems	29	302	22	324	11
Theology and Philosophy	152	1419	178	1595	10

Papini, *Life of Christ*; Yamamuro, *Life of Christ*; Zako, *Dawn in the Sick-Room*.
 Ashiya, *Christian Gems for Children*; Hurlburt, *N. T. Stories*; Kagawa, *How to Teach the Life of Christ*.
 Yamamuro, *Matthew*; Bosanquet, *Preparation for Baptism*; Uchimura, *Ten Commandments of Moses*.
 Kagawa, *Love, the Law of Life*; Tsunashima, *The Gospel of Suffering*; Otani, *The Sick-Bed as a Place of Contest*.
 Kagawa, *Before the Dawn*, Vols. I, II; Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*; Hugo, *Les Misérables*.
 Lindsay, *Luther, His Life and Times*; Matsuzaki, *Christian Martyrs in Japan*; Imaizumi, *History of the Jews*.
 Kagawa, *Breaking Thro' the Crust*; Kagawa, *From Star to Star*; Kagawa, *The Globe as a Grave*.
 Hoashi, *Browning, the Poet of Mankind*; McNair, *Stories of the Hymns*; Dante, *The Divine Comedy*.
 Kimura, *Starving Farmers*.
 Kagawa, *Social Studies in the Bible*; Yamamuro, *The Purification of Society*; Kagawa, *Moral Uplift and Social Reform*.
 Kagawa, *The Religion of Jesus*; Sato, *Thoughts on "From Science to Religion"*; Hoashi, *Religion and Life and Death*.

APPENDIX III

CONSTITUTION OF THE JAPAN CHRISTIAN NEWS AGENCY

1. *Name and Purpose*

(a) This Body shall be called the Japan Christian News Agency (Nihon Kirisutokyō Tsūshin Kyōkai).

(b) The purpose of the Agency shall be to link together for mutual help those who are interested or engaged in Evangelism through the Secular Press, and to provide the equipment and means of consultation necessary for this work.

2. *Members and Officers*

(a) Members of the Agency shall consist of the following :

- i. Two representatives from each affiliated body engaged in this form of work.
- ii. Such individuals as approve of the purpose of the Agency and desire to help it.

(b) The Officers and Committee shall consist of a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and three other members.

N.B.—One of the Committee shall be from Tokyo, one from the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe area, and two others shall represent rural areas.

(c) These Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for the period of one year. Their offices may be renewed.

(d) There shall be one full-time Secretary supported by the Agency, who shall work under the direction of the Officers and shall be responsible for the conduct of the work.

(e) The Chairman shall be empowered to employ such additional help as may be required with the approval of the Committee.

3. *Work, Meetings, etc.*

(a) There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Agency in the autumn for the purpose of receiving reports, the election of officers, and conference. The Chairman shall determine

the place and time of meeting, and the Secretary shall notify all members one month beforehand. However with the approval of the Committee he may postpone the meeting for one year.

(b) The Chairman, with the approval of two members of the Committee, may call special general meetings, and such other meetings as he may deem necessary.

(c) The Agency shall publish a Bulletin three times a year and shall distribute it among the members.

(d) The Agency shall distribute among all affiliated bodies all literature produced by each; it shall be responsible for the distribution among such bodies of suitable articles for the press; and it shall handle such applications for Christian teaching as are received through co-operative work. It shall further be prepared to act on behalf of any affiliated body in its negotiations with the press. It shall conduct surveys, studies and propaganda necessary for the work.

4. *Finance*

(a) Affiliated bodies shall pay an annual membership fee of twenty-five yen.

(b) Other members shall pay an annual fee of five yen.

(c) The Agency shall be entitled to receive gifts from sympathizers for the promotion of the work.

N.B.—Clause (a) may be modified under special circumstances, especially in the case of newly established bodies. Such modifications shall require the sanction of the Committee.

5. *Miscellaneous*

(a) The National Christian Council and the Federation of Christian Missions shall be entitled to nominate one representative each to the Agency. Such representatives shall have the same privilege as ordinary members, but they shall be excused from the payment of membership fees.

(b) The offices of the Agency shall be at the Seikokai New Life Hall, 1 Ginza 7-chome, Kyobashi-ku, Tokyo.

(c) A two-thirds majority at the Annual Meeting is necessary for the alteration of any rule.

APPENDIX IV

TENTATIVE BUDGET OF J.C.N.A.¹

N.B.—For purposes of convenience this is stated in yen on the assumption that ten yen = one pound = five dollars.

<i>In</i>	Yen
Per Japanese and foreign supporters . . .	10,000·00
Per co-operating newspaper evangelism offices . .	1,500·00
	<hr/>
Total	11,500·00
	<hr/>

Out

Salaries of staff:

1. Manager and article-writer at 250 yen per mensem . . .	3,000·00
2. Business manager at 150 yen p.m. . .	1,800·00
3. Reporter-clerk at 100 yen p.m. . .	1,200·00
4. Clerk at 80 yen p.m. . .	960·00
5. Office boy at 30 yen p.m. . .	360·00
	<hr/>
	7,320·00
Office rent at 100 yen p.m.	1,200·00
Writers of occasional articles	480·00
Travelling	600·00
Postage	600·00
Office expenses at 100 yen p.m. including printing	1,200·00
Miscellaneous	100·00
	<hr/>
Total	11,500·00
	<hr/>

¹ See text p. 155.

BV Walton
3445 - The press & the
"N25" Gospel -

1041325 -

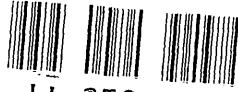
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Indianapolis.

C. J. Dyck

W. D. Bray

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